PCW TODAY

Britain's best-selling classic computer magazine

Issue 9 May-Jul 98

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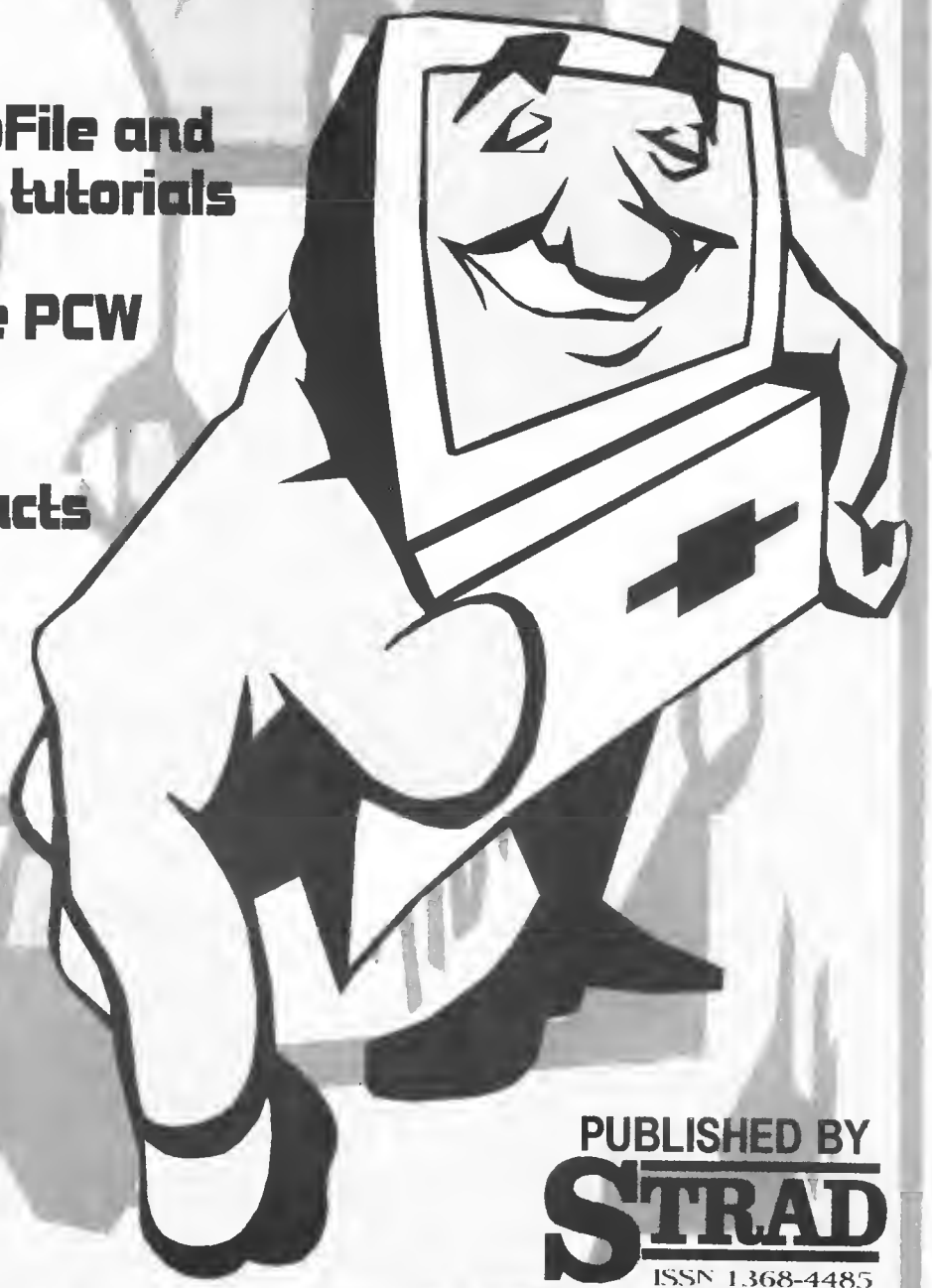

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The British Amstrad PCW Club
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This Issue...

HELLO and welcome to issue nine of *PCW Today*. In this edition we are launching a major new campaign - SOS - with the aim of bringing new software to the PcW 16.

Roscanne users have had a raw deal so far and with this campaign we are hoping to redress some of the balance. If you are a budding programmer, or if you simply have some fresh ideas, please get in touch. We need your support!

And if you're one of the many owners of the older PCWs, don't fret, we haven't forgotten you. There's two new series from the pen of Rod Shinkfield and Kathleen Thorpe this issue, as well as a review of another couple of big software releases.

Next issue it's time again for the PCW-equivalent of the Oscars. This year, we've decided to Christen our annual awards. They're to be called "The Joyces", which was of course the nickname of the 8000 series of PCWs. For the second year running, you have the all-important vote, so be sure to complete the nomination form at the back of the mag. If you don't want to deface your copy, just jot your votes down on a scrap of paper.

Yours as ever,
Adrian Braddy.

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news update...

Amstrad boss one of Britain's richest

A NATIONAL newspaper survey has named Alan Sugar as one of Britain's richest men with a fortune worth £221 million.

The Rich List 1998, published by The Sunday Times, names the Amstrad chairman as the 108th richest person in Britain.

Sugar, 51, made his millions from the hugely successful Amstrad PCW and CPC computers which he created back in the eighties. Since then, he has gone on to become one of the best-known millionaires in the country as controversial chairman of Tottenham Hotspur.

Last year, Sugar's old Amstrad was split in a complex demerger, leaving two main companies - Betacom and Viglen. Betacom was renamed Amstrad at the AGM in November.

Canny businessman, Sugar, is said to have pocketed around £85 million in the deal.

All that remains of the old Amstrad is a vehicle called Amslit, whose sole purpose is to pursue two legal actions against companies who supplied goods to old Amstrad.

■ **PRESS TALK** The publishers of the Rich List 1998

The Rich List, compiled annually, estimates that Alan Sugar's fortune has visibly grown from last year's total of £186 million. He has risen two places as a result.

The survey also shows that Sugar is still the fifth richest player in the computer industry, despite the massive impact of PCs over the last decade.

Born in the east-end of London, Sugar started-off selling fruit on a market stall, he moved on to selling electronics from the back of his van and eventually formed the company now known as Amstrad, selling consumer electronics.

Today, Sugar can be seen touring the nation's schools as part of the government's scheme to encourage young entrepreneurs. He holds a key role in Tony Blair's new "Young Enterprise" Initiative, and is hard at work searching for the next generation of "Little Alans".

Sugar recently became executive chairman of his third company, when he took over at the helm of Viglen Technology, the company that split from the old Amstrad last year.

The move was made in an effort to stem the falling value of Viglen's share price. Viglen is moving into the educational computers market and it is hoped that Alan Sugar's new-found role in Britain's schools can only help the company.

But Sugar has not turned his back on new Amstrad. The company are busy producing set-top boxes for Sky's new digital services. It's another scheme that is an almost guaranteed money-spinner for Sugar and his company. Digital TV looks set to make a huge impact around the world.

Dixons take up '16 support

AMSTRAD have handed over customer support for the PcW 16 to Dixons.

Having sold their remaining stock of '16s to the Dixons group which also includes Currys and PC World, the firm have also handed over telephone support. Users with any queries to Amstrad about the '16 are now passed on to the Dixons hotline. Cynics are now suggesting that this indicates the end of the line and there will be no more PcWs produced.

Amstrad dispute this claim, saying: "If Dixons ask us for more machines, we will probably make them."

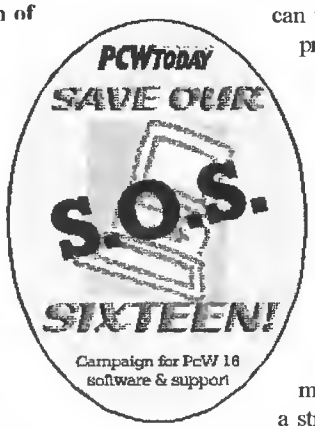
Amstrad are theoretically still responsible for the '16. If any further bugs are found, they pledge to update the operating system.

The Dixons help line number is: 0870 9013000. LocoScript Software's PcW '16 support number is: 0891 515715. Calls to the latter cost 50p an minute.

Campaign launched to save the PcW 16

THE FLAGGING PcW 16 is to be given a boost with the launch of a major new campaign.

"Save our Sixteen" is a new initiative set up by *PCW Today* in an effort to persuade programmers to write software for the fledgling PCW.



Editor of *PCW Today*, Adrian Braddy, said: "The PcW 16 is increasingly becoming the odd one out in the PCW world. The vibes coming from long standing PCW users towards the new PCW are largely hostile because the machine will not run CP/M."

He added: "Programmers seem to have given up on the '16 before they even got started. All we need is a good emulator or compiler and we're up and running."

PCW Today aims to do everything it can to persuade prospective programmers. Together with other magazines and companies, we will promote any new software - free of charge.

Information on all- new programs will be circulated to the 3000 registered users of the '16.

The hope is that programmers will realise that there is a strong market out there. Before very long, there will be 40,0000 PcW 16s in use around Britain. Their users will want new software.

For full details of the support SOS can offer PcW 16 programmers, write to SOS, PCW Today, 150 Oxford Road, Middlesbrough, Teesside TS5 5EL, and we'll send you a pack.

PCW beats the bugs!

EVERY major accounts package for the PCW is now millennium bug-proof.

SD MicroSystems report that they have just completed reprogramming their finance software so that it will operate past the year 2000.

The Norfolk-based company are the leading retailer of money software and sell packages like Personal Ledger, Business Ledger and Small Trader.

Connect Software say that Money Manager is also fully millennium bug safe, and ready to withstand the date change.

CP/M gets all friendly

DANSOFT have launched a new front end for CP/M called DIRECT.

The product is billed as "a friendlier face for CP/M" and is intended to make the PCW operating system less daunting.

It enables you to run programs, then return to DIRECT when you've finished without even a glimpse of the dreaded A> prompt. You can copy files and so on from the security of DIRECT's user friendly interface.

The CP/M utility PIP is instantly available, it is loaded into memory when you boot up the first time. There is also an on-board word editor called Memo Write. From here you can type notes and reminders without needing to load up one of the bigger word processors.

All DIRECT functions are accessed by pull-down menus to make it even easier for the user.

You can get DIRECT on 3" or 3.5". It costs £10.50 and £7.50 respectively. Cheques are payable to Susan French. Contact: Dansoft, 44 Charcot House, Highcliffe Drive, London SW15 4PT. 0181 8769251.

The disc cat's out of the bag now!

SD MICROSYSTEMS have just released Auto-Discat, an automatic indexing and labelling system that also acts as an aid to efficient disc usage.

The program captures the DIRectory of any disc you put into the drive. You can then sort the files and print out labels showing the disc reference and the filenames, ready to stick onto your disc.

It will also print the DIR as a list on full size paper, or it will even save the DIR as a text file so you can load it into LocoScript, building up a DIRectory of DIRectories.

Auto-Discat costs £12.50 on 3.5" or 3" disc from SD MicroSystems, PO Box 99, Thetford, Norfolk IP23 1NA. 07000 736427.

The company can also supply labels for most printers in different sizes with a special printer advance for lining up sheets of paper.

SD MicroSystems have also started a new disc recovery service. They charge £10 per disc on a no-fix, no-fee basis.

Express delivery

PD BLAKE has introduced a major new graphics package - Graphics Express.

The new program cleverly combines picture editing with a rolling display. It is available on 3.5" disc for £24.50 from PD Blake, 99 Normandy Avenue, Beverley, E. Yorks. HU17 9DW. 01482 864230.

PCW Club Scene

Amstrad Computer Club Incorporated
Open to all Amstrad users in South Australia. Weekly meetings are held on Tuesdays at 2/24 Torreno Street, Mitcham, between 6.30pm and 9pm. Contact David Simpson, DAS@picknow.com.au

Berkshire PCW Users Group
This lively group is run by Ed Harris, who also edits the regular newsletter - PCW Link. The group welcome postal members. If you'd like more information, contact Ed at 121 Bullbroook Drive, Bracknell, Berkshire RG12 2QR. Tel: 01344 428938.

Birmingham and West Midlands PCW Club
To find out more about this midlands based club, get in touch with John Bell on: 0121 4343078

Brisbane PCW User Group
Mike Mackenzie runs this Australian club. To contact him from outside the country, telephone 617 32775701. Mike is also now the LocoScript Software representative down under.

British Amstrad PCW Club
As a result of an Extraordinary Meeting in April, the South Essex club decided to modify the club's constitution, changing the name to reflect their new-found national status. All budding artists are being urged to come up with a new logo The group anticipate that their membership will rise to 300 during 1998. The quarterly Disc Drive magazine continues as normal, although we haven't received a copy of the latest issue yet. Contact David Lalieu, 10 Sheridan Avenue, Thundersley, Essex SS7 1RD for more details.

Capital Computer Club
Could this be the home of the world's most Southerly PCWs? The group cover PCWs along with other formats. For further information, write to: 13 Eagle Street, Karori, Wellington 6005, New Zealand.

Cornwall PCW Club
The January/February issue of the clubs newsletter has just arrived and makes interesting reading. There's an excellent double-page spread on the history of the PCW. Future meetings planned include a look at Basic on Saturday March 14, and on Saturday April 11, the group will be investigating graphics. For more details, contact chairman, John Walker on 01752 706266.

Crawley PCW Club
The club's Esther Welch runs a great monthly newsletter, which has some of the strongest PcW 16 content around. Recent editions have included the millennium bug and the internet. Postal members are welcome. Contact John Fisher on: 01732 863062.

Devon PCW Club
Contact: Chairman, Peter Godderidge on 01626 330373, Treasurer, Christine Stone on 01392 252646, or Newsletter Editor, Andy Yound on 01395 577972.

Hastings & Eastbourne PCW Club
This group runs a great monthly newsletter, which has just been blessed with a new editor. This big club also holds monthly talks and demonstrations. Star Guest at the next meeting will be Howard Fisher, director of LocoScript. To find out more about this highly active club, contact George Magee on: 01323 833969.

Heads of the Valleys Group
This Welsh group still continues to operate and the few remaining members still meet occasionally. Contact: Anthony Hill on 01222 618012.

Hereford Computer Club
It costs £15 to join up and that includes subscription to the club magazine - Keyboard. Meetings are held from 7pm on the first Wednesday of each month at The Cellar, 41 Widemarsh Street, Hereford.

Javea Computer Club
Regular meetings are held at Pedro's Restaurant, Javea in Alicante. PCW users are welcome. Contact Tom Hughes on: 96 5583508.

Joyce Computer Club
The PCWs are known as Joyces in Holland and this group proves that they are just as popular as in Britain. Contact: Frank Van Empel, Leksmondhof 8, NL-1108 EM Amsterdam.

Kentish PCW Club
Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of every month at the Chapel Hall in Bush Road, Cuxton. Postal members are welcome. For further details, contact: Leslie Merchant, 14 Mill Road, Northfleet, Gravesend. Tel: 01474 335882.

Leeds Amstrad PCW Club
The group holds monthly 'hands-on' meetings with demonstrations of PCW hardware and software. For more information on the Yorkshire club, contact Paul Newmark, 18 Claythorpe Road, Leeds LS16 5HW. Tel: 0113 2755576.

MicroDesign International User Group
Membership to this large club costs £8 and includes subscription to the excellent magazine - The Design Tree which comes out twice a year and covers all PCW matters, not only desktop publishing. Members also have free access to more than 6000 public domain discs. Many of them are fonts and graphics for MicroDesign. Contact: Doug Cox, 132 Adelaide Grove, East Cowes, Isle of Wight PO32 6DF. 01983 296366.

Morley Amstrad PCWers
This club meets in Morely Public Library at 7.30pm on the second Tuesday of every month. Membership costs just £10. The group has a library of PCW software and a regular newsletter. Contact: Frank King on 01924 430319 for further information.

Perthshire PCW Club
For more information on this Scottish PCW group, contact David Paterson, 26 Moulin Crescent, Perth PH1 2EA. Tel: 01738 621346.

RADSTOCK.pcw
This relatively new arrival on the PCW club scene meets on the second Friday of each month at the Radstock Methodist Church from 7.30pm. For more information, contact Adrian Hooper, 40 Kilmersdon Road, Haydon, Radstock, Avon BA3 3QN. Tel: 01761 436276.

SCOTWEST.pcw
The editor has been snooping around Currys, checking out the PcW 16. He liked what he saw, but concludes: "what a pity it's five years late". The Easter edition of the club newsletter - CHR$ is something of a millennium special, with details of how the date change will affect PCs and PCWs. The newsletter also contains a useul small-ads section called Track. Contact: David Williams, 32/34 Carfin Street, New Stevenson, Motherwell ML1 4JL. Tel: 01698 732403.

SIG - Amstrad PCW (USA)
Nope - still can't find the contact details for this group! Can anyone help out? The group is a branch of MENSA in the States and they produce a distinctive newsletter.

Somerset PCW Club
The group are bothered by falling membership, so have decided to allow PC users into the group. They produce a quarterly newsletter. For details, contact: Elsa Turner on 01935 823618.

South Essex PCW Club
Now renamed The British Amstrad PCW Club because its more national approach. Contact David Lalieu, 10 Sheridan Avenue, Thundersley, Essex SS7 1RD. Tel: 01702 551618.

Teesside PCW Users Group
The North East's only PCW club holds monthly meetings on a Monday at Acklam Library in Middlesbrough. This may have to change as the council have now decided to charge. There is now no joining fee and the annual membership charge has been waived. Members simply pay £1 per meeting. For further details, contact Gladys Baker, 8 Knayton Grove, Stockton on Tees TS19 7RW. Tel: 01642 580018.

Thornton PCW Club
Meetings are held on every second Tuesday at the Cleveleys Community Centre, Blackpool. New members are very welcome to the group, formerly known as the Wyred Computer Club. For more information, contact Steve at 5 Carlsile Grove, Thornton Cleveleys, Lancashire FY5 4BY.

U3A PCW Discussion Group (Malaga)
Ken Tether has set up a PCW discussion group under the umberella of the University of the Third Age. The group now has 13 members and is still growing fast. The group are now looking to get hold of a PCW of their own. Meetings are now held at the Lux Mundi Ecumenical Centre in Fuengirola. Membership includes a subscription to the excellent newsletter - The Front Page. Ken welcomes any *PCW Today* reader visiting the area to pop in to one of the meetings. Contact Ken on: 34 5 283 2096.

Widmore PCW Club
This Bromley based group is still going strong. There are currently 40 members who meet on the third Wednesday of the month at Bromley Adult Education College. The group have access to nearly 30 PCWs, including a PcW 16. For more details, contact Dorothy Featherstone on 01689 858105.

8 Bit Magazine
The latest edition of 8 Bit has still not appeared. Brian Watson has already stated that the magazine will now cease publication at the end of this year. To subscribe to this quarterly multi format magazine, contact: Brian Watson, Harrowden, 39 High Street, Sutton-in-the-Isle, Ely CB6 2RA. Tel: 01353 777006.

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Quick on the draw

We review the major new creative package from P.D. Blake

EVERYONE has a touch of creativity in their bones, no matter how hidden away it may be. This talent simply needs to be tapped.

The PCW has always been famous for unleashing written creativity (how many best-sellers have been rattled-out on an 8256?), but the good old PCW is equally as good at developing your artistic potential.

■ **DRAWING** The Express "Sketch" screen

Whilst there have been numerous word processors available down the years, there have been surprisingly few PCW graphics packages.

There is, of course, the famous but pricey MicroDesign, and there are several public domain programs like PrintMaster and PCW Draw. However, when it comes to anything in between, the cupboard is bare.

That was, until now! P.D. Blake's biggest project to date is Graphics Express, and his first venture away from BASIC. It fills the gap as a middle of the road picture processor, or whatever you want to call it.

Graphics Express is essentially two programs - Sketch and Display. The first of these is the integral part of the package. This provides an editing screen of 208x464 pixels. From this you can draw lines, circles, rectangles, or draw freehand. You can also load-in icons, blocks, pictures or shade files. The package includes a graphics disc that contains a selection of each of these. Further discs are also available. There is a set of letter icons, so it is possible to include text in your documents.

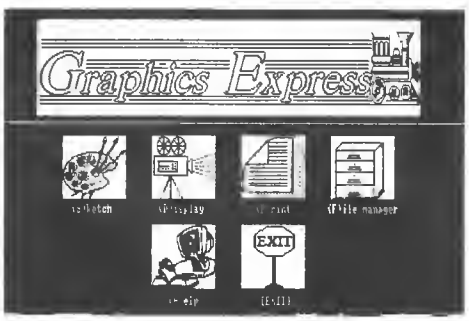
Positioning the graphics is simple - although the cursor cannot be seen on screen, a readout in the bottom right of the screen indicates where the cursor is. It is actually possible to make certain, by using the pen to make a dot, this forms the top, left hand corner of the picture. After a little practice you soon learn how to position graphics exactly where you want them.

There are 24 shades automatically loaded into the memory every time you boot up. In all honesty, you shouldn't need any more, but there are others available on the graphics discs. You use the shades by positioning the cursor over an area of the picture and using the fill command.

There's no need to memorise any of the "hot keys", they are all listed down the side in a menu, not dissimilar to those found in MicroDesign. In fact, the sketch screen has the look and feel of the GRAPHICS screen in MicroDesign 3.

Freehand drawing is simple. Just move the cursor to the start position, select a pen, then begin to draw. Unfortunately you delete individual lines, and the suggestion given is to constantly save the picture, reverting to the last save should you make an error.

The second part of the package is Display. With this, you can create rolling displays of the pictures you have created. Creating a display is very easy. You create a list of the files in the order that they are to be displayed, then select the length of the pause between each picture. You can even select a pause of 0 seconds, making simple animation possible.



■ **PRETTY** The main screen with it's icons

Graphics Express is very user-friendly. Instead of a manual, the package comes with detailed on-line help that can be accessed from the main screen. There is a main index of subjects to make things easy.

This package has a very attractive graphical interface. The main menu screen has the Graphics Express logo emblazoned across the top and six picture-icons representing the different features of the package below. This stunning presentation does have its downside - it slows the package down. However, this is made-up for somewhat in other areas of the program. Express runs entirely from memory, and you will only need discs for loading pictures - a definite time saver.

You can print in four different sizes, at six densities (if you really need to!). There is also an on-board file manager to organise your discs. You'll also need to jot down file names from here - Sketch will not search the disc for you.

Despite a couple of niggles, Graphics Express is a great product, it looks good and is tremendous fun!

INFO

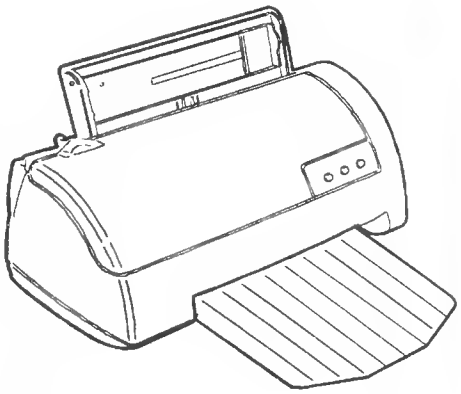
GRAPHICS EXPRESS

Price: £24.50
Company: P.D. Blake
Contact: 01482 864230
Format: 3.5" PCWs - runs from CP/M. Not compatible with PcW 16s
Ease of use: ●●●
Features: ●●●●●
Value for Money: ●●●●
Overall: ●●●●
Verdict: A feature-filled graphics program that enables you to draw and manipulate graphics. Great fun to use.

Inkjet printer package for just £135 – or less!

Unhappy about your existing print quality? Then take advantage of our special offer – LocoScript 4, Printer Support Pack and the Olivetti JP170 monochrome inkjet printer. We'll throw in LocoSpell free of charge too.

This complete package costs just £135 including VAT and delivery. We also provide a cable to plug the printer into the PCW9512 or PcW10's external printer socket, but if you have a PCW8256/8512 or PcW9256 you may also need the Power Pack at an extra £50 (saving £9.95 on our standard price). And as we supply a Start-of-day disc ready set-up for the printer, it's easy to get going straight away.



or print in colour for just £195

If you want to print in colour, take advantage of the new low price of the Epson Stylus Color 400. Our complete Stylus Color 400 package costs just £195 – that's £30 less than our previous price. The package include the Stylus Color 400 printer, the cable, LocoScript 4, LocoSpell and the Printer Support Pack (but you will need the Power Pack if you have a PCW8256/8512 or PcW9256). And just like the Olivetti package, the Start-of-day disc we supply lets you get going straight away. *Note that the Stylus Color 400 cannot be used with CP/M programs.*

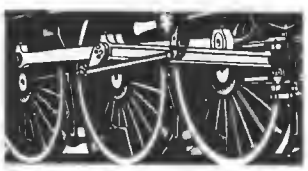
Great new printing facilities

LocoScript 4 and these printer packages give you great new printing features. You'll be able to include pictures in your documents, print newspaper style columns and print with a range of typefaces at different sizes – and print in colour with the Stylus Color 400 package. The printers include a cut sheet feeder, so you can load a sheaf of paper into the printer and simply leave it printing.

As these printers are inkjet printers you'll find them much quieter than the Amstrad's printer. Use the Olivetti's built-in fonts and you'll find printing is faster too.

Just £99 if you have LocoScript 4

If you currently have LocoScript 3 or LocoScript 4, it gets even better. Return your LocoScript 3 Master Disc with your order and we'll reduce the price by £10 to £125 for the Olivetti or £185 for the Stylus. Return your LocoScript 4 Master Disc and the complete Olivetti package will cost an incredible £99 or the Stylus package £159!



LOCOSCRIPT SOFTWARE
10 Vincent Works, Dorking RH4 3HJ
Phone: 01306 747757; Fax: 01306 885529

Note: The JP170 is colour upgradeable, but this option is not supported by LocoScript 4. The Power Pack normally costs £59.95 unless purchased together with a printer package.

Yes, I'd like to order a new printer package for my PCW:

☐ **Olivetti JP170**
- ☐ I have LocoScript 1/2 £135
- ☐ I have LocoScript 3 £125
- ☐ I have LocoScript 4 £99

☐ **Stylus Color 400**
- ☐ I have LocoScript 1/2 £195
- ☐ I have LocoScript 3 £185
- ☐ I have LocoScript 4 £159

☐ **Locomotive Power Pack** £50
(bought with a printer package)

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Phone No:

Delivery details if different from above

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Payment method:

☐ Cheque payable to LocoScript Software

☐ Access/Mastercard/Visa/Switch:

Valid from ☐☐ to ☐☐ Switch issue no. ☐

I confirm that I am the cardholder and that the card is registered to the above delivery address

Signature

Model of PCW (Please circle)
8256 8512 9512 9512+ 9256 10

PCW Disc drive (Please circle) 3" 3½"

The write stuff

Kathleen Thorpe tries out the new "Writer's Desk" for all budding word-smiths from the pen of John Craggs

ONCE upon a time, there was a little girl who loved to write poems. As she grew older, she began to experiment with stories and articles. Later, she married a handsome prince, although he wasn't riding a white horse - not in this story anyway.

Some years after (by which time she was a middle-aged woman with five children), the handsome prince changed her life completely. He bought her a shiny new Amstrad PcW 10.

Now there was no excuse. She had to start taking her writing seriously. Enter *PCW Today* with a small advertisement for "Writer's Desk" by John Craggs. She couldn't resist it, so immediately sent off for a LocoScript 3 version and hopefully lived happily ever after.

Well! How would *you* begin a review of a method to develop and improve *your* writing skills?

Seriously though, I knew my work needed something extra so I had nothing to lose and much to gain by trying "Writer's Desk". At the moment it is available on 3.5" discs in ASCII or LocoScript 3 format.

After accessing the disc, you are presented with an impressive number of files spread across four groups (0, 1, 6 and 7), with a suggested reading order for the files in Group 0. The remaining files can be inspected by pressing [f5], so you can choose the order in which you want to read them (either on screen or by printing out).

This method is actually better than reading a book on the subject where you are bogged down by reading each chapter in order. Not always the best way to digest information.

Group 1 on the disc is called TEMPLATE. It contains seven different templates for LocoScript which can be copied to your files discs and renamed 'TEMPLATE.STD' Each template has its own DOC file to explain how to use it. There are templates for most kind of manuscript a writer will need, including a "Submissions Record", a "Waiver" and one for invoices.

Group 6, called TECHSTUFF contains 17 files, mainly about how the PCW and LocoScript can make a writer's life easier. It includes John's "Twelve Commandments" on disc handling, how to use headers and footers and why he "considers the PCW to still be one of the best writing tools around".

Group 7 is the tutorial itself, comprising of 40 files, ranging from 4k up to 16k in size. John really gets down to the nitty gritty of writing and makes it very clear that only those who are totally professional and businesslike in their attitude to writing have any chance of becoming successful. This is confirmed by comments from famous writers such as Lord Archer and Barbara Cartland, which have been included on the disc.

He explains in great detail your different publishing rights such as First British Serial Rights or FBSR.

How to deal with writers block - every writer's nightmare!

How to create and build realistic characters and handle dialogue. How to get the most out of your articles using different angles for different markets and much more.

His personal view on books and magazines that are aimed at writers, with some suggested titles and contact addresses.

How to apply for Contributor's Guidelines. Media Packs and how to use them to their (and your) best advantage.

How to make money from Reader's Letters and by writing fillers.

How to write Proposals, including an example of a Proposal letter, and the importance of keeping a submissions record.

INFO

WRITER'S DESK

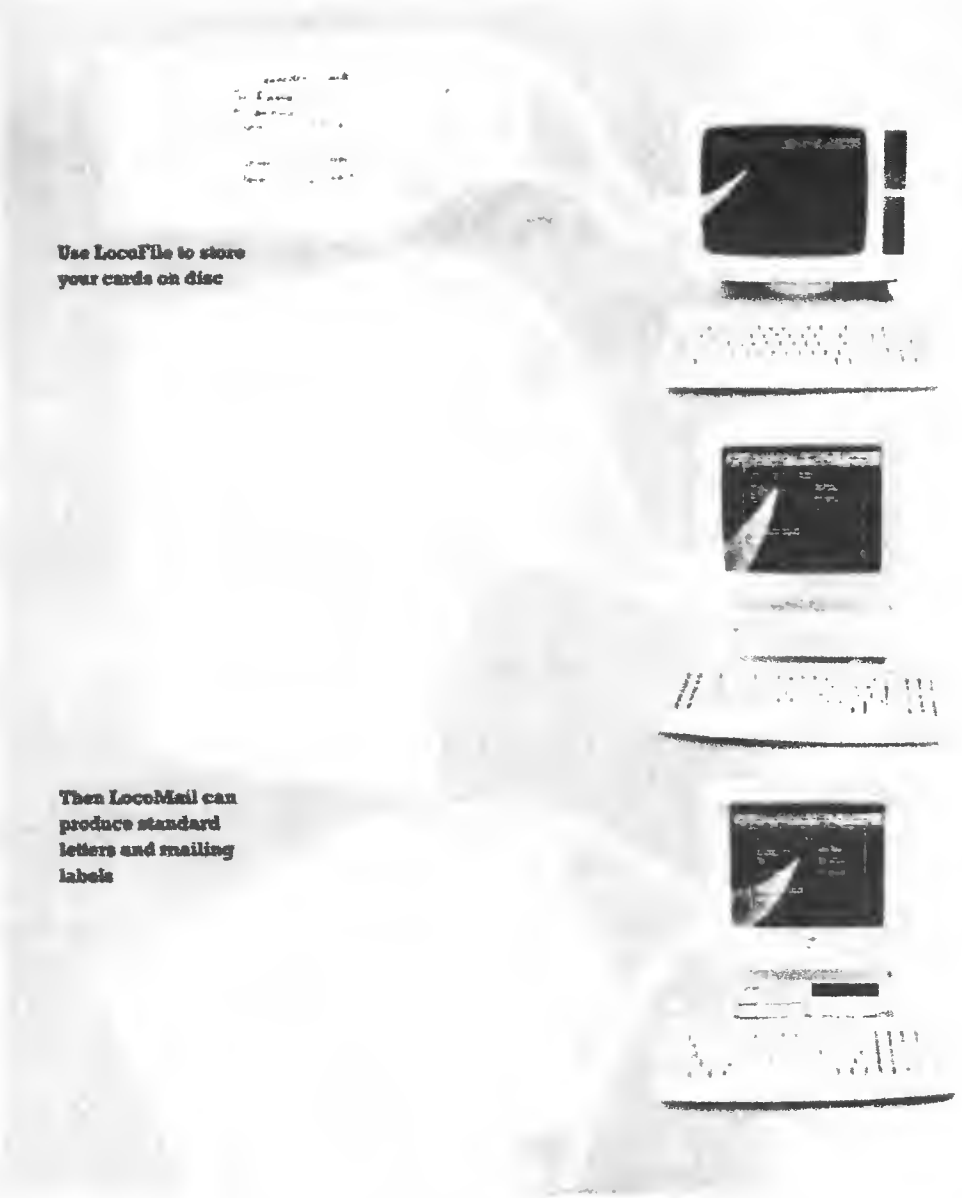
Price: £5.75
Company: John Craggs
Contact: 01703 364821
Format: 3.5" PCWs ASCII/ LocoScript. All text files will work with the PcW 16
Ease of use: ●●●●●
Features: ●●●●
Value for Money: ●●●●●
Overall: ●●●●●
Verdict: Whether you're a novice or a pro, this writer's guide is for you. The range of templates mean that this is far more than just a book.

Presentation of manuscripts is dealt with, but the best lesson so far as this is concerned is to examine the layout on screen, then print it out to see the effect. This is another area where a disc-based tutorial has the edge over a book.

The only area of writing not mentioned is poetry but as most of the advice can be adapted for this genre, it isn't really a problem.

The entire disc is jam-packed with advice and information which will satisfy any writer's needs, so whether you are a beginner or already an established writer of stories, articles or fillers, Writer's Desk would certainly be a worthwhile addition to your library.

The clear, concise (and very often humourous) tutorial will not only help you enjoy your writing more, it could also spur you on to greater success as a writer.



LocoFile and LocoMail

LocoFile and LocoMail are available for all models of PCW. Normally LocoFile costs £39.95 and LocoMail £29.95, but as a special offer to PCW Today readers, order LocoFile and get LocoMail free!

Both products include comprehensive user guides and work with LocoScript 2, 3 or 4.

If you have LocoScript 1, you will need to upgrade to LocoScript 4.

Get sorted with LocoFile and use your PCW's full potential

Your PCW can be much, much more than a word processor. With LocoFile it's ideal for keeping records too.

LocoFile is as easy to use as a manual card index. And as a bonus, it keeps your cards in order for you automatically. So it's a simple task to keep track of everything from names and addresses to details of your photograph collection.

It's easy to look up information – just ask LocoFile to look for cards containing a word, a value or a phrase and it will search for you.

Whether you use your PCW for correspondence, your business, your church or for a club or society, LocoFile will be instantly useful. Keep your Christmas card list, notes for a thesis, ... The range of ways LocoFile can save you time and effort is endless.

And use LocoFile's partner LocoMail to produce standard letters, print labels, lists – directly from your LocoFile cards.

To order, fill in and return this coupon, or call 01306 747757

☐ **I'd like LocoFile and LocoMail for my PCW** **£39.95**
Special PCW Today price includes LocoMail FREE!

Name:_____

Address:_____

_____

_____

_____ Postcode:_____

Tel:_____

PCW Model _____ Drive A: 3" / 3½"

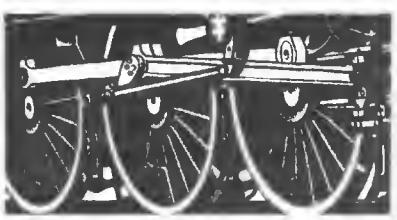
Payment by:

☐ Cheque to LocoScript Software

☐ Access/Mastercard/Visa/Switch

Valid from ____ to ____ Switch issue no. ____

Signature:_____



LOCOSCRIPT SOFTWARE

10 Vincent Works
Dorking, Surrey RH4 3HJ
Phone: 01306 747757
Fax: 01306 885529
www.locomotive.com

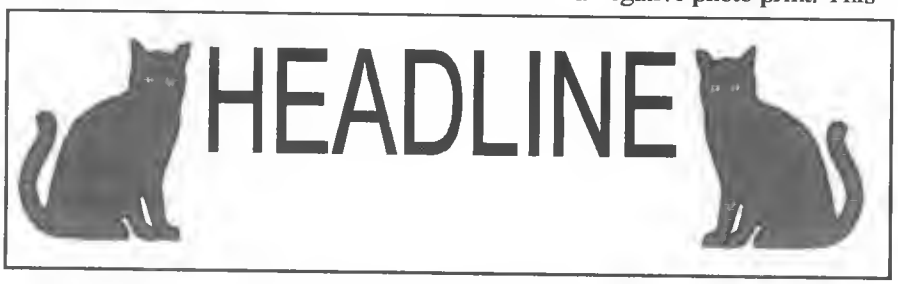
Advanced LocoScript graphic design

Adrian Braddy takes us through more new features from LocoScript 4

LOCOSCRIPT Software have, in effect, introduced three new versions of their world famous word processor, since the first release of Loco 4 at the start of last year.

We should actually be up to LocoScript 6 by now, instead LocoScript modestly prefer to call it version 4.10 or 4.11.

The latest version is far more than just a bug-fix. If you return your master disc with a fiver to LocoScript Towers in Dorking, you'll have access to a whole range of new graphics options when the disc comes back.



■ **REVERSED** Pictures in LocoScript 4 can be altered to face left or right - ideal for headlines

The exciting new capabilities mean that LocoScript has not only strengthened its position as the market leading word processor, but it is now also a viable competitor in the desktop publishing world. It is unlikely that LocoScript will ever beat the versatility of MicroDesign in this department, but it makes a valiant attempt.

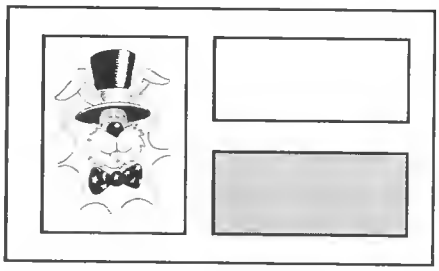
The fist big improvement in 4.10/11 is the ability to reposition and resize graphics on the LocoScript page, after they have been loaded into the document. This gives you far more flexibility than was previously possible. Professional page design is now a lot easier and quicker. Sadly, you still can't see the picture on screen, but that would take some fundamental reworking of the software.

It is also now possible to display the picture in three new ways. The graphics can be "Horizontally Reversed", which, to cut out the jargon means that you can flip pictures to achieve a mirror image. This is particularly useful when you want two pictures side by side, or at either side of a headline or title. As the illustration shows, you can have the pictures facing inwards or outwards.

Another picture-tweaking feature is the ability to "Inverse" the picture. In other words, everything that was black, becomes white, giving an effect similar to that on a negative photo print. This affects a rectangle around the graphic, the box size determined by the scale of the MicroDesign area it is saved as.

The third feature is called "Picture Outline". This keeps the picture as it is, but draws a box around the border. The size of this is again set by the confines of the MicroDesign area. These confines can be rather tight, as when a graphic is saved from MicroDesign, it is usual to leave as little space around the picture as possible, to save on disc space. If you have access to MicroDesign 3 you can edit this size of course, putting a bit more space between the picture and its outline.

Each of these three new options can be accessed from the menu that appears when you select your image to load. You can choose to use any one of the options, or all three if you so desire. Each can be ticked by pressing the spacebar to select them.



■ **BOXED** Some examples of what L4 can do

The pictures can all now be scaled up to an impressive eight times, far more than MicroDesign allows. Of course, images stretched to this size will inevitably look rather jagged, whatever the resolution of your printer.

Another new feature, and perhaps the most significant, is the ability to draw boxes. This has long been on the wish list of LocoScript improvements, so it is more than welcome. The box option menu now appears at the bottom of the Layout menu, accessed by pressing [f2]. You can draw clear boxes and even ones filled with a shade. Boxes are treated like graphics and can be inserted at a fixed point, or as a text character.

Lastly, the one criticism of Loco4 was that it was notably slower than before. LocoScript's programmer has managed to solve this to an extent, by speeding LocoScript up, and it is this feature that may be welcomed the most.

If you haven't got LocoScript 4 yet, why not? It is leaps and bounds in front of Loco 3, and with a price tag of just £39.95 it will hardly burn a hole in most pockets. For more information, give the LocoScript -people a bell on 01306 747757.

Preview

Issue 10, Due August 1998

TIME BOMB!

How will the millennium bug affect the PCW?

PCW TODAY AWARDS

The results of your big vote in the PCW Today Awards '98

MY PCW

The return of this popular series

PLUS

Your favourite columnists, David Langford & Steve Denson
LocoScript, MicroDesign, Programming, LocoFile, CP/M
And lots more things we haven't even thought of yet!

ROOTSPCW93

A Genealogy system for the
PCW 8000, 9000 series and PCW10

This system provides a comprehensive method of storing and cross-referencing family data, and displaying it in various forms.

It produces **Descendants Charts, Trace Back, Family Charts, Trees, Chronological Charts, Build Your Own** and various selective lists

Special version for daisywheel printers to print the **Wide Tree** in one pass. Must use Mini Gothic 15 wheel.

Some output in ASCII for import into Locoscript.

Gedcom conversion program included allows you to import data from or export to other systems

Also, **Cross-check** to verify details and a **Demo** program to show you how to use the system.

Supplied on 3" (still some left) or 3½" discs.

****

Now available - **ROOTSwin** for the PC.

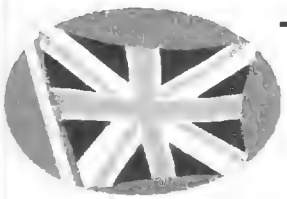
This system can import the files used on the PCW, there is no need to re-enter all your data. Price includes conversion to PC format.

See web site http://www.sarsden.demon.co.uk for details

****

Price £22.50 inclusive of p & p.

Write for descriptive leaflet to: W P.FORD
Sarsden, Blackboys, Uckfield, East Sussex, TN22 5JU
Tel. 01825 890688 email:
wilf@sarsden.demon.co.uk



The Great British Word Processor!

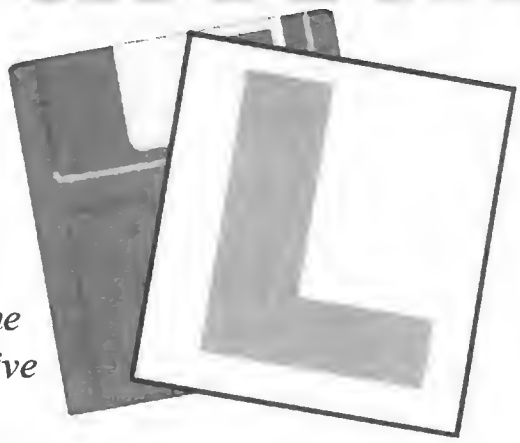
Protext in its CP/M version is the fastest and most complete word processor on the Amstrad PCW. On one disc, the program features include:

- Logical Keystrokes
- "Plain English" commands
- A free tutor file on disc
- Fast text handling
- Network, hard disc, MicroDesign and LocoScript compatability
- Mail-merging and spell-checking included *at no extra cost*
- Free printer support for *virtually any* printer. You can use your printer's built-in fonts or colour capability without any additional expense
- Free user support is included in the purchase price, and the Protext helpline operates (at normal 'phone rates during evenings and weekends
- Protext handles printing in columns with ease
- Simply configured for more advanced purposes
- Protext can easily produce ASCII files to let you transfer between computers, either by software or for e-mail purposes
- The Free Protext User's Club is available to all Protext users for the open exchange of tips, templates and information

Protext v2.23 has had 12 years of continuous development. Despite being highly developed, above all, it is very fast and the user friendly 'look and feel' of the program has been maintained throughout its development. Because of Protext's wide range of useful features, it is impossible to cover everything here, but further information is available if you send an A4 SAE to Brian Watson at Protext Software, *Harrowden*, 39 High Street, Sutton-in-the-Isle, ELY, Cambridgeshire CB6 2RA. Alternatively, you can phone 01353 777006 (from 7-9pm weekdays, or any time at weekends)

CP/M Protext, the one-disc word processing solution, costs just £25. It is available from the above address or from ComSoft, 10 McIntosh Court, Wellpark, Glasgow G31 2HW. Orders may be placed by phone on 0141 5544735, qoting your credit card details. Please state the computer model and your drive A: size when ordering.

A hard driving lesson



Kathleen Thorpe investigates how even the humble PCW can be fitted with a hard drive

THE MAJORITY of PC users would never consider buying a machine unless it had a hard drive fitted. So can a PCW user have one of these seemingly highly desirable objects?

The two most popular hard drives for the PCW are made by Cirtech:

1. GEM INSYDER - which as the name suggests fits internally but is only compatible with the 9512.

2. GEM - Compatible with most models of PCW (not the '16). Contact Cirtech for more details), this sits on the desk next to your PCW.

These come with a minimum of 20 MB, which is equal to about 27 720k floppy discs, so their storage capacity is enormous. This may sound a bit worrying, the thought of storing all your programs and files in the equivalent of 20,000k can be a daunting prospect, but the hard disc is split into the equivalent of four drives, each containing eight groups in LocoScript and 16 in CP/M.

This would mean that if you had a two drive machine, adding a hard drive would give you an extra four. A & B being the two floppy drives, while C, D, E & F are the hard drive, not forgetting drive M as well of course.

That gives you an incredible total of 56 groups in LocoScript and 112 in CP/M. So in reality, using a hard disc is just like using a floppy, only you don't have the tedious chore of swapping discs over.

An added benefit is that when your PCW is first switched on, instead of a blank screen waiting for instructions, you have your most used program ready for use. This is entirely your own choice, it could be LocoScript or CP/M. Your second choice can be accessed by first holding down the [ALT] key at switch on.

Of course the biggest benefit is the speed with which your programs run. Loading is almost instantaneous and entering a LocoScript document to edit is only marginally slower than using the M drive.

So exactly how does a hard drive work? First of all, most hard drives run off their own power supply, so you'll need to plug it into a nearby mains socket.

The transformer takes up most of the space inside the casing along with other components which supply electricity to the drive mechanism. There is usually a small electric fan which although very quiet, keeps everything cool.

The interface will be specially designed to work with your model of PCW. The discs (or platters) aren't much bigger than those in a floppy and like a floppy, are coated with tiny magnetic particles which store all the data. But unlike floppies, they are made of solid metal, are more sensitive ad rotate much more quickly (several thousand rpm).

The drive mechanism is airtight to stop dust interfering with its operation. Each platter has its own read/write head which can find stored data in milliseconds. Some less known hard drives need to be 'parked' using a special program. Failure to do this could result in the heads being jolted out of position and the disc may fail to work. The GEM and INSYDER have automatic head parking, so this is not a problem. They also come with a program called 'MANAGER.COM' which helps you keep track of all the files you have stored on them.

It is possible (although rare) for a hard drive to fail, and as with floppies, the danger of erasing the wrong (and much needed) file is ever present. So always keep a back-up copy of your most essential files on a floppy disc. You should also keep your program master discs in a safe place (but you should be doing this anyway).

There are a couple of disadvantages to the hard drive, one is cost. You really have to weigh up the benefits you will reap, against the expense of paying around #200.

Another drawback is, because of the storage capacity of a 20MB drive (even more so if you get the 40MB version), you have to be very disciplined when you create and position files. You also have to be absolutely certain that you really do want to erase all those files (especially if you are using ERA **). There is also a utility to reformat the hard drive, thus destroying everything on it. A lot of thought has to go into everything you put on (and where you put it), or take off your hard drive.

By following the same basic principles you use when organising files on your floppy discs, you shouldn't have any problems with organising your hard drive.

Pinboard Computers *01462 894410*

AMSTRAD PCW SECTION

If you are still using your PCW then we are still very involved and providing as full a service as we can, Repairs, Spares Consumables are all available.

3.5" EXTERNAL DRIVES (PCW 8256/8512 & 9512)

A Drive	**£70.00**
B Drive	**£70.00**
Switchable A Drive	**£80.00**
Switchable B Drive	**£80.00**
Switchable A or B (**Datadual**)	**£115.00**
Switchable A & B (**Datatwin**)	**£165.00**
Switchable A & B (**Datatwin**) with **Cable Remote Control**	**£185.00**
PSU (except Datatwins where PSU is standard)	**£20.00 extra**

OUR 3.5" DRIVES ARE UPGRADEABLE TO ANY OTHER PACKAGE.
e.g. an A drive can be upgraded to a Datatwin for just **£115.00**

MEMORY
256/512K memory for PCW 8256 and 9256 **£13.00**

DISKS (3.5")
Box of 10 DS/DD disks with labels **£6.00** **4 Boxes** for only **£20.00**

PRINTER RIBBONS
£5.00 each Ribbon for PCW 8256/8512, 9256, PCW10
£12.00 for **Qty 3**
£4.00 each Ribbon for PCW 9512, 9512+
£15.00 for **Qty 5**

REPAIRS & SPARES

3" Drive Belt	**£2.40 each**
New Armature	**£7. 00 each**
Exchange CPU Board	**£55.00**
Exchange PSU Board	**£50.00**
Exchange 3" 'A 'Drive for an 8256/8512	**£50.00**

REPAIRS

We offer an extensive Repair Service at very reasonable rates. Our vast supply of second hand items, too numerous to list, ensures respectable prices. Whatever your requirements please contact us for availability and current price.
Callers are welcome to purchase or bring their computers in for repair or upgrade ,but must call first and make an appointment.

FOR EXAMPLE
9512 printer armature repair costs £17.00 plus £8.50 return carriage.

8256 disc drive exchanged £50 for the exchange drive plus £15 fitting charge plus return carriage of about £15 for the console

SECOND HAND PCWs
Second hand refurbished PCW's have a 3 months warranty

8256 3"...	**from £99.00**
9512. 3"....	**from £125.00**
9512 3.5"....	**from £150.00**

All Prices quoted are fully inclusive unless otherwise stated.
Payment accepted
MASTERCARD VISA
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PCW CLUB MEMBERS
we have a
SPECIAL DISCOUNT FOR CLUB MEMBERS

DISK TRANSFER
If you have upgraded or you need to swap files with someone with a PC; as well as providing you with the switchable 3.5" drives and the software to convert from CPM to DOS yourself , we can convert discs for you
from £3.50 per disc

***This months special offers* , 2nd hand**

Star LC24-10 Printer	***£58***
HP DeskJet Printer	***£90***
Canon BJ10ex Printer	***£68***
NC200 Battery Notebook	***£107***
As new Canon refurb, boxed BJC210 Printer	***£100***
Olivetti JP360 col. new	***£110***
10 x 3" New Disks	***£20***

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SG7 6HP
Tel: 01462 894410
Fax: 01462 894460

Help File

Send your tips and questions to Help File, PCW Today, 150 Oxford Road, Middlesbrough, Teesside TS5 5EL

Black box questions

Q: I READ your review of the SD MicroSystems Black Box with interest and I have a few questions which I hope you might be able to answer before I commit myself to buying one.

1) You tested the Black Box on an 8256. I have a 9512 with one drive - has anyone tested the unit on this and how easy is it to connect up.

2) I have very little information about using a B: drive other than what is in the user instructions for the 9512. In the process of copying files from the 3" drive to the 3.5" drive the same as copying from the C: drive to the A: drive on a PC?

3) I understand that the 3.5" drive is not bootable. Does this mean that the following process would have to be used:

a) Load Loco4 as usual.
b) Insert a disc containing files and change disc as usual.
c) Copy the files one by one onto the 3.5" disc.

Then, when I load up next time I go straight to step 3, or is it the case that the case comes complete with instructions.

4) This is a silly question I know, but are the 3 5" discs the same as those used in PCs?

5) You say that some programs will run from the B: drive - which ones in particular.

I am sorry to have gone on at such length but I would like to know more about this before lashing out £50.
Valerie Scott, Edinburgh

A: 1: The Black box works fine with a 9512 set up. It involves a slightly different process but, it is almost as easy.

2: Yes, it's a fairly similar process. Using LocoScript is the easiest method. From the disc management screen you see both the A: and the B: drive. It is a simple process to transfer files between them.

3: I'm not entirely sure what you mean. You would follow the process shown to copy files, remember that you could copy the contents of an entire disc at once if you wanted from LocoScript. When you want to use the files, just load up LocoScript and put the 3.5" disc in the drive and press [f7]. You can then access the disc just as you would a 3" disc.

4: There are two types of 3.5" discs used on the PC. These are called HD and DD. Only the latter will work with the PCW, and they are harder to come by. They may also be marked "720k" or "1MB". Ignore anything marked "1.44MB" or "2MB", they are not suitable for the drive. Some people use these drives, but we advise against it.

5: LocoScript and CP/M will not run from the B: drive as they are auto-booting. Many other programs that are loaded from CP/M will work.

If you have any other queries at all I strongly recommend that you call the retailers of the Black Box - SD MicroSystems on 07000 736427.

They are well known for being very helpful.

Joyce man found by Help File

IN RESPONSE to the query in last issue's Help File, several people called with details of where to find the author of the Joyce PC emulator, John Elliott. Even the man himself got in touch.

The good news is, if you want a copy of the "Joyce" emulator, just send £1.50 and a DOS format disc to Robert Nisbet, 1 Silver Birches, Stanton St. John, Oxford 0X33 1HH, 01865 351448.

Foreword at fault?

Q: LOCOSCRIPT 4.10/4.11 is the best word processor around including anything I have on my PC. The only problem I have found is when using Foreword v1.15.

Foreword has always handled Loco 2 and 3 as its foreground but when transferring text from Foreword to Loco 4 the transfer completes perfectly but after saving the document to Loco 4, the error message READ SETTINGS appears and the system locks up. After rebooting with just Loco 4, everything returns to normal.

So is it Loco 4 at fault? Or is my version of Foreword just archaic.
Derrick Gaskin, Brentwood

A: It may be that the changed structure of the new version of LocoScript cannot accept the text transferred from Foreword. (Ansible Index had to be upgraded) However, transferring text from Foreword into LocoScript has always been regarded as a slightly risky task. Have you tried saving to a LocoScript document open in the M: Drive, and transferring it over later? This sometimes helps settle things down. Anyone any better ideas?

Safe and secure

AN EASY way to protect your confidential LocoScript files from prying eyes is to give it a suffix of $$$ For example: PASSWORD.$$$

This file cannot be edited, unless of course it is renamed. But someone who doesn't know LocoScript, won't know that!
Brian French, Sheffield

A puzzling problem

Q: IN THE last issue of *PCW Plus* there was mention of a program which searched out the number of words which could be found in a short title etc.

The reason for my asking this is that I have tried several shareware and Public Domain suppliers at the computer fairs but cannot get anything except anagram programs.

This is the last thing I need. What I am looking for is a short program which will look through a word like *PCW Today* and sort out the number of words which can be formed from it like DOT, YAW, POT, PAY etc, without the need to use all the letters involved.

The reason for this is that I am the editor of our local Civic Society newsletter and would like to get a puzzle which I could use when I have a couple of lines of space left at the bottom of the page. I would like to be able to ask 'How many words can you find in CIVIC SOCIETY for example. This would only take one line, but would help to fill an awkward space.
Derek Lilly, Clevedon

A: I have searched the issue of PCW Plus mentioned and the only program mentioned that comes close to your description is Crossword Solver, which seems to merely be an anagram solver!

Ironically, the PcW 16 program, Word List, featured elsewhere in this magazine does what you want but I know of no such program for the other PCWs.

Does anyone else know of a suitable program? Or, can anyone write one?

Making LocoScript easier to read

USING LocoScript 4 with its default settings, it is easy to boot up and get straight into creating impressive looking letters etc, making as you go along any style and size changes you feel will enhance the appearance of the text.

But - and this is a big but - as the ends of the lines disappear off the end of the screen, it's a job to look at what you've just written without continually moving to the end of the text lines and back using the [LINE]. [SHIFT] and [ALT] keys.

This is, of course, disconcerting when you want to make corrections and alterations in the text and you don't have an overall picture of what you've been writing.

My simple solution to this is to put a (+PItch 10) code at the beginning of the text and let the PCW think you are creating a document in 10 point. Now you can read the whole of every line that you have written at a single glance.

When you have finished creating, editing and spell-checking, simply scroll back to the (PItch 10) command code and delete it. You can now save and print your document using the default font (or any other font you may have chosen in your page layout).
Terry Donovan, Chesham

PcW 16 database needed

Q: I USE A PcW 16 and use my machine for writing reports and articles - short letters I still write by hand. The spreadsheet, diary and calculator functions are of no interest to me.

However, I would like to catalogue my library of books, about 5000, for which I have been told I need a "card-index program" or a "label program" might do.

I would require only four lines for each book, namely:

a Author
b Title
c Publisher & date
d Notes

with the ability to search by author's name. If a title could be found by searching for a key word, that would be a bonus but is not essential.

Please can you suggest anything to help me? Any advice will be gratefully received.
Sqn Ldr Alan Birt, Bury St Edmunds

A: The honest answer is that, at present, there is nothing available for your needs. What you require is very basic - a simple database. Sadly there isn't one for the '16.

SuperCalc copying

THE FOLLOWING may be of interest to some of your readers who use SuperCalc2.

When backing up files, these slash commands are the ones I use.

Working Disc: When finished
/SAVE
/COPY
From? Enter Range; (eg 1:53)
[ENTER]
remove working disc and insert first backup
To? Enter Cell: **A1 [ENTER]**

/SAVE
/COPY
From? Enter Range; (eg 1:53)
[ENTER]
remove backup 1 and insert second backup
To? Enter Cell: **A1 [ENTER]**
/SAVE

I have used this method for over a year and find it simple and faster than LocoScript COPY FILE.

My machine is a 9512+. I have no idea if this will work on other types.
A.G. Owen, Longfield

Basic recovery

THE SMALL Basic listing shown below resides on my CP/M Start of Day disc, named as RECOVERY. BAS. It can be used to recover accidentally deleted CP/M related files.

Running RECOVERY.BAS saves typing the four POKE address expression, integer expressions (shown in Help File, Recovering lost files, Issue 8) each time a lost file needs recovering.

```
10 REM RECOVERY.BAS
20 REM see: PCW Plus. Issue 102. Page
   45 / PCW Today. Issue 8. Page 18
30 POKE 64480,229:POKE
   64432,229:POKE 64348,229:POKE
   64040,229
40 SYSTEM
```

Once RECOVERY.BAS has been typed, saved and run, on listing, line 30 will look thus: 30 POKE 64480!,229:POKE 644 32!,229:POKE 64348!,229:POKE 64040!.229 - where have the exclamation marks come from?

Anyone know why that happens?

Filing the Loco way!

Rod Shinkfield starts a new series on the LocoFile database

Many people fight shy of data bases, believing them to be too complicated to set up and use.

A database is simply another way of processing words and numbers in an easily retrievable form, something a PCW is particularly good at. And, like word processing, with a little patience and practise, processing database records should prove just as easy.

Begin by carefully reading the Database User Guide, learning it a bit at a time rather than impatiently skipping over the learning stage. Having happily used MasterFile 8000 for a number of years and now, more recently, LocoFile, LocoFile will be the main database featured.

Both MasterFile 8000 and LocoFile are very good databases, each having disadvantages and advantages over the other.

The main disadvantage of MasterFile (for a confirmed LocoScript user like myself) is having to leave LocoScript and reboot everytime I want to use MasterFile. LocoFile is a card-index database and only one card can be shown on the screen at a time, though, it is quick to flick through the card index.

How the indexes are set up is the key to getting the best out of LocoFile. While in MasterFile single line fields of many records can be viewed on the screen at the same time - depending on how you have set up the various formats MasterFile allow

If you mainly use LocoScript, having LocoFile always available will prove quite an advantage - and was the main reason I've now got LocoFile. Both MasterFile and LocoFile user guides have all the information you should ever need. And with more space than I have available, the answer to any problem you are having is there, somewhere, between their covers - so study them carefully.

The first thing you should do, as with Master disc, is to make a working copy on a fresh disc (with the write-protect flap open) and then put the Master disc away in a safe place.

Using CP/M's DISCKIT to copy the Master disc in two goes is much quicker than LocoScript's five or more changes of disc if you have a single drive machine. My LocoFile came on a single 3.5" disc, with a User Guide, and an instruction sheet.

The LocoFile program is in INSTE306.EMT 198k and must be installed on to a new Start-of-Day disc before LocoFile can be used. If using LocoScript 1 you must upgrade before you can use LocoFile. If using LocoScript 2, you are recommended to upgrade to LocoScript 3 (or 4).

Along with your order, ask for the "LocoScript 2 Installation Guide" if you are staying with LocoScript 2, or "LocoScript 3 Installation Guide" if you are staying with LocoScript 3 and your LocoScript 3's upgrade installation leaflet is dated before July 1996. Also clearly state on your order the PCW model and whether drive A is 3" or 3.5". If still in difficulties you can write to Customer Support: LocoScript Support, LocoScript Software, Dorking, Surrey RH4 3HJ - or telephone between Mon to Fri 10am to 12 noon and 2pm to 4pm.

Assuming you are already using LocoScript 3: First load LocoScript 3 and format a blank disc (which will be your new Start-of-Day disc). Have any other program's Master disc (LocoSpell, LocoMail, etc) you may wish to install ready, too. With LocoScript's Disc Manager Screen showing put your copy of LocoFile's Master disc into drive A and press [SHIFT] [EXTRA] and [RELAY] to enter the installation program.

Follow the screen instructions carefully, choosing to 'Add to/Update current LocoScript item' by typing "I" when requested. Remember to star LocoFile when you are asked which programs to include on the disc. Once the installation has been done, with your new Start-of-Day disc still in drive A, press [SHIFT] [EXTRA] and [EXIT] to reboot your machine. Watch the screen, you should see the word 'LocoFile' added to the usual screen read-out. LocoFile has been correctly installed.

With your new Start-of-Day still in the drive A, press f8 and choose Show hidden files. You should see LocoFile.Joy revealed in group 0 on the disc manager screen. Take a copy of LocoFile.Joy onto drive M (the memory drive). Put any other LocoScript Start-of-Day disc you may have into drive A and press f7 to log it on, then transfer a copy of LocoFile.Joy into each Start-of-Day disc's group 0. (I often use a special cut-down version of a LocoScript 3 Start-of-Day disc with only a single Courier 12 pt font available when working on a particularly large database - giving plenty of free Ks in drive M)

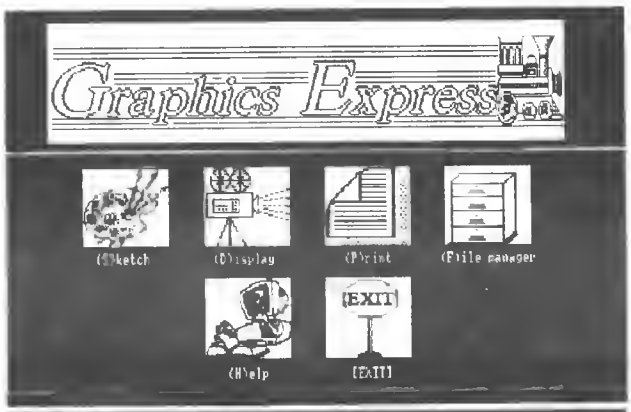
The LocoFile program can be added to any other Start-of-Day disc in this way without going through the original installation program again.

Various tutorial and sample files can be found on your copy of LocoFile's Master disc, to start you off. If you wish, make another Master disc copy and use this extra copy for working through the tutorial files.

Keep the write-protect hole open on your main LocoFile Start-of-Day disc. Also, to avoid mucking up any database files, always copy a database file across and work on it in the memory drive. Then if you do get into a mess you can simply switch off the machine and go put the kettle on (taking the LocoFile User Guide with you to read).

Database files in another program such as MasterFile 8000 that you want to transfer (import) into your new LocoFile database is quite easy to do. I'll tell you how to get LocoScript and LocoFile to do all the hard work for you in my next article .

Graphics Express



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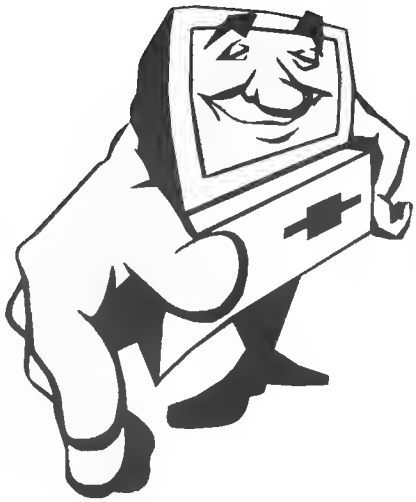


We pass judgement on the PcW 16 and chart its amazing life from conception to desktop

THE STORY SO FAR

THE PcW 16 has passed that all-important embryonic stage in its development and it can no longer be truly called "new". There are thousands of users who have been using the machine for over a year now, but has it been a success story?

Roseanne was first dreamt-of back in the early nineties. The PcW 10 was on sale and there was massive demand for it. Amstrad desperately wanted to keep the PCW going, but the parts were scarce and soon the PcW 10 would have become too expensive to mass-produce.

As a result of several meetings at Amstrad, they decided to break the mould and develop an entirely new PCW.

As they had done, way back in 1984 with the original 8256, Amstrad approached Locomotive Software - as LocoScript were then called. They told them that they wanted a new PCW and asked for a sophisticated "LocoScript for the Nineties", with all the trimmings of MicroSoft Word, including the all important "What You See Is What You Get".

The idea was to base the new computer around the old PCW 10, using a faster Z80 processor from the team at Zilog who produced the old 4mhz version. However, LocoScript Software calculated that it would take just as long to write a brand new word processor and operating system as it would to update LocoScript and CP/M sufficiently. And, because it is simpler to write a completely new program, rather than update an old one, they recommended that Amstrad should do that instead.

On LocoScript's advice, Amstrad next spoke to Creative Technology about the possibility of a new operating system. Creative's programming whizz, Simon Hargreaves had already produced the superb MicroDesign and The Network, so was well suited to the job. Working with a team of freelance programmers and experts from Amstrad, they spent the next three years meticulously creating Roseanne. The idea was to develop a graphical alternative to CP/M, in effect reinventing the PCW.

As with earlier models, basic software was bundled with the system, but it was never the intention that this should be end. The hardware bristled with upgrade possibilities. A hard drive could be fitted, as could a colour monitor, a modem, more flash memory and RAM. The operating system was designed so that external software could be easily run from disc, or the internal cabinet.

At that time, Amstrad operated under a "Direct" scheme, where they made all their sales via mail-order and over the phone. In early 1996, details of their new PcW 16 were printed in the Amstrad catalogue, much to the amazement and delight of established PCW users.

The struggling *PCW Plus* - the last remaining news-stand PCW magazine - immediately saw the possibilities of a new PCW and ran huge review features which were often forced to repeat themselves because of a lack of information.

The editor saw the '16 as the last chance of saving his magazine. Each month, *PCW Plus* printed a piece stating that the new PcW would be ready for shipping very soon, but the saga seemed to go on and on Constant bugs in the software dogged the project and its launch date was continuously put back. Throughout 1996, *PCW Plus* writers, using beta versions of the '16, wrote tutorials on the new machine, telling readers how to use a computer they hadn't even seen yet.

Optimistic news stories, saw *PCW Plus* clutching at straws handed out by PcW programmers. "Around 30 packages are being developed, some of them new to the PCW!" was a familiar claim. A new CP/M emulator was promised along with databases, new word processors, fonts, communications and graphics software. The list went on.

In March of 1996, *PCW Today* was launched, with the strange title of *MicroMotion* (soon banished forever in issue 2). We latched onto the *PCW Plus*-generated excitement about the PcW 16. Our review of the new machine concluded: "This could be the rebirth of the PCW! Software producers are jumping at the chance to write software for the versatile new operating system There may even be a CP/M emulator on its way. Just sit back and watch." If only those could have been prophetic words.

Showing a touch of naivety, in the same issue, we printed a "News Exclusive", proclaiming that Creative Technology were planning to develop MicroDesign for the new machine. Looking back now, the idea may sound ludicrous, but, like any story in The Sun, it was based on a fragment of truth.

According to Amstrad, Creative Technology had originally wanted to convert the acclaimed MicroDesign desktop publisher for the new Roseanne Operating System. For this reason, they persuaded Amstrad to use the old Z80 processor, instead of a RISC based chip, as was the original plan. They deserve praise for this, because a PcW 16 using a different processor would have

become just another PC and not by any stretch of the imagination a PCW!

Sadly, the gamble did not pay off, and the task of converting MicroDesign to Roseanne format proved too great. However, optimism remained that the PcW would attract other new pieces of software. There was already talk of a basic graphics package for the machine.

PCW Plus, were starting to give up on Amstrad. They were hanging on by the ends of well-bitten finger nails, in the hope that the arrival of a new PCW would be their saviour. Stories they printed, laboured under the misconception that a new CP/M emulator would enable the '16 to run all PCW software. In truth, such a program would struggle to cope anything near half the complexity of something like MicroDesign.

The magazine also planned to put fliers in every box of every PcW 16 sold, a surefire way of getting a few extra thousand subscribers.

Sadly, the delays in release proved too much for Future Publishing, who pulled the plug on the valiant *PCW Plus* at the end of 1996, just after the PcW 16 had finally hit the road, almost a year behind schedule. Andrew Chapman, lambasted Amstrad in his final *Plus* editorial: "If the PcW 16 had come out on time, all could have changed" he said bitterly.

Were PcW 16 sales hit by the closure of *PCW Plus*? That only Amstrad can tell you. Around the same time as *PCW Plus* sank, Amstrad decided to scrap their Direct sales scheme, and sold a batch of 10,000 PCWs to the Disons group for high street sales. The price fell from the original £350, to £299. It was immediately slashed again to £270 in the sales.

Continuing on where PCW Plus left off, and spurred on by personal recommendations from the former editor of that journal, *PCW Today* continued to spout nonesense based on a mixture of optimistic rumour and speculation coming from the programmers working on new '16 programs. Even up to issue four, we were still talking about MicroDesign for the '16! Also around this time, there was even talk of a brand new "Super PCW" in other magazines, but Amstrad soon quashed that one.

It now seems very unlikely that there were ever thirty pieces of software being written for the '16. Possibly around half that number were planned, and some of those never even got past the drawing board. Where some of the promised software went remains a mystery. Some of the projects were never started, whilst others were left half finished. But were reports of the "almost finished" software an exaggeration? What ever happened to those Chess, Comms and Basic packages?

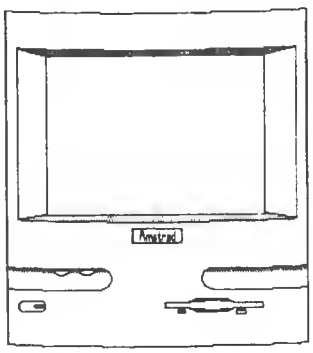
The accepted theory is that there simply isn't enough money in the PcW 16 market to encourage writers of new software. That, combined with some downright bad luck in certain quarters, meant that only two packages eventually surfaced. The absolutely superb, but somewhat obscure, Inventory Master and the equally good Finance Manager were both released, but hardly made the necessary impact.

Could it be that their failure scared off other programmers? What they did prove was that Roseanne is a superb Operating System, if only it could be utilised more!

As Amstrad shifted internally, the entire stock of the PcW 16 was sold to Dixons, who immediately marked the price down to £150, then soon after to £130. Why was the price of the '16 dropped from £350 to £130 in such a short space of time? I'll leave you to make up your own mind.

So, what will be the next chapter in the remarkable story of the PcW 16? Let's hope that this tale, at least, has a happy ending. The PCW's loyal fans deserve that much!

THE FINAL VERDICT



HAS the PcW 16 been a success? Ask a proud owner of a 9512 or an 8256 this question and they will probably say "no", with a hint of "I told you so". Ask users of the PcW 16 the same question, and you will probably get conflicting responses.

Most PcW users are more than happy with their '16, particularly if they bought it at the ridiculously low price Dixons are offering. Roseanne is a fine operating system and it is ten times better than CP/M without a shadow of a doubt. The main difference is that there was a lot more software written for CP/M.

Simon Hargreaves and the Amstrad team created a dream of an operating system that is actually better than the antiquated DOS, and easier to use than Windows.

However, Amstrad have no longer got the power that Microsoft have today. The PcW is not an industry standard, the writers who were producing software for the '16 were all people who wrote for the old PCWs and CPCs. You are never going to attract PC programmers to such a niche market. In this economy-led society.

Sadly, the story of the '16 is one of "If onlys". It promised so much and could have been so much more. If only the programmers had stuck with it, if only it had sold brilliantly, if only *PCW Plus* had stayed afloat.

The unleashed potential of the PcW 16 is remarkable, if only someone would unleash it!

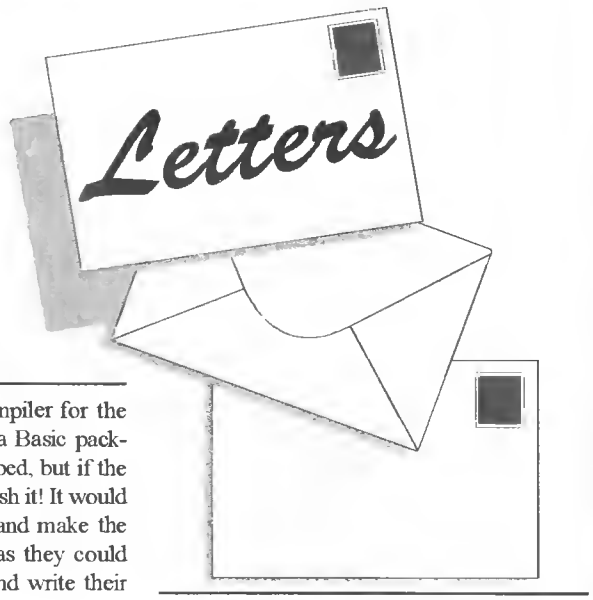
It's not all gloom though. If Amstrad stick with the machine and continue to manufacture it, before long there will be 100,000 PcW 16s in use. A computer with a solid base like that is bound to attract new programmers and who knows what could happen.

In the meantime, the legendary inventiveness of PcWers is sure to safeguard the future of the computer. Some of the holes left in the software are bound to be filled by the ingenuity of the users.

The majority of people who bought the PcW 16 did not expect anything more. They bought a word processor, like the many other competitors on the market. They bought it because it was cheap, and easy to use. For most people, the '16 does exactly what it says on the box. And, to the majority, that is enough.

the mailbag

Send your letters to me: The Editor, PCW Today, 150 Oxford Road, Middlesbrough, Teesside TS5 5EL.



PRIZE LETTER

Wins a computer copy-holder

CONGRATULATIONS on the excellent publication - I have just subscribed and it's great to see that there's a good and informative mag for a computer that tends to keep its head down!

I bought a '16 at the end of last year and I'm pleased to say that it's been great for my work as a student. However, the news of no imminent software is disappointing. The '16 has a great operating system and a good amount of RAM, so it's a pity to see this isn't being exploited.

To any developers reading this: PLEASE write a Basic, Pascal or C Compiler for the machine. I read last issue that a Basic package development had been stopped, but if the coders are reading, PLEASE finish it! It would open up a whole new market and make the future brighter for '16 users, as they could buy public domain programs and write their own.

I do a lot of programming and would love to start coding for the machine for my own and other users' benefits.
Mike Saunders, Ulverston

PCW Today Thanks Mike, for summing up what I know many '16 users feel. As you may have already seen, we're starting an SOS campaign in an effort to persuade the programmers to get their finger out and develop some software. They need encouragement.

making the most of what you've got

THANK YOU for sending me my first copy of *PCW Today*. As anticipated, I am finding the magazine of very real interest, even though the coverage of information on the PcW 16 is, by necessity, rather limited.

I note, for instance, that my worst fears about '16 software appear to be well grounded, and that unless some sort of minor miracle occurs, we are unlikely to see the promised communications or graphics programs.

A minor point of interest - a letter in The Mailbag (Issue 8) mentions obtaining Version 1.12 of the Roseanne Rescue Disc from the Betacom Care Department: I called the LocoScript Hotline on 0891 515715 to ask why my PcW 16 was crashing so often, and they volunteered to send me a free copy of the new disc. As your correspondent says, no more crashes!

As you probably know, the new Rescue Disc contains, in addition to the updated OS, two external programs to run on the '16. These are the Word Match crossword solver and the Data List, which is presented as an aid to preparing a family shopping list. I have amended a copy of the latter, after deleting all the shopping list details, to provide myself with a useful Parts List and Bill of Materials for use with my hobby of model ship building.

With its help I can now maintain an ongoing quick reference to my available stocks of the dozens of small block, cleats, deadeyes and so on required for each ship, together with running totals of items needed to complete the current building programmes (I have three vessels 'on the stocks' at this time!)

Thank you for introducing me to your valuable magazine and I shall look forward with keen anticipation to receiving the next issue, whenever this becomes due.
HGC Baddeley, Glasgow

PCW Today: Yet another source for the latest '16 Rescue Disc, yet again, not an 'official' source, but they're all worth a try! For anyone who missed the last issue, there is a new version of the operating system available that solves all the bugs.

Full details of the two extra programs on that disc can be found on the PcW 16 Page.

updating again

IN THE MAILBAG (Issue 8) I was interested to see John William's letter regarding updates for the PcW 16 operating system.

I rang the number suggested but was referred to Amstrad, telephone 01227 228888. I met a slight resistance here, but was advised to call-back if I was having difficulty obtaining the updated OS disc. This I did and Amstrad said they would put a disc in the post

I received the disc within a couple of days along with advice on how to install it.
Edward Green, Clitheroe

PCW Today: The saga continues, wih the moral of the story seeming to be - persist!

sonnet for an 8512

Earth has not anything to show more fair:
Than the soft glister of the Amstrad's screen,
Whether in black and white, or black and green:
In silence now it calls me, standing there,
To touch its keys and all my thoughts lay bare
Preparing for the pages of some magazine
Or writing to some friends not often seen,
Recounting what has passed aince they were there.
So long it is since I last used ink and pen,
Have I forgotten quite that childhood skill?
Some day I'll dig out my fountain-pen!
But not while I have ribbon in the printer still
For 8512-ward my fingers turn and yet again
I'll bash away, re-joyce-ing in my new-found skill!
Harold Simmons, Wallingford

PCW Today: Poetry in motion!

wish list for the '16

I AM a proud owner of a PcW 16, but a little disappointed with the support we are getting. I think there are a few things that would very much improve our situation. I am very pleased with the machine - it does a wonderful job.

I would like to see three programs produced for the '16 that would make the machine a first class tool.

More true type fonts. If a true type fonts program was produced what a difference that would make to the machine. It is DOS compatible, but the DOS font program will not work on it.

Scanner. Another advantage - this would enable us to put logos in our documents and there is no end to what could be done.

Colour printer. With more fonts and a scanner, a colour printer would be a must.

Internet. What a bonus that would be!

Surely all these things are possible. As I understand it, most computers are used mainly for word processing, so if the '16 had these programs, it would make a first-class machine at the fraction of the cost of a PC.

Amstrad say they can produce machines on demand. I am sure that if these extras were available, the demand would be there.

I only wish I was able to write programs, I would certainly have a go.
E.E. Wright, Hassocks

PCW Today: Firstly to clear-up a misconception. The PcW 16 is not actually DOS compatible in the true sense of the words. Whilst you can read PC files into the '16, it cannot run DOS programs. Therefore, PC fonts will not work either. However, the designers of the '16 obviously intended there to be new fonts available for the machine - it's just that nobody has got around to producing them.

As for the rest of your wish-list. Well, we can only hope and pray! Comms and graphics software, as well as a scanner, were under development. But all work on these projects has ceased. Any letters of encouragement are welcomed

happy enough

AFTER retiring from the ambulance service as a paramedic and training manager I am now a self employed lecturer in First Aid and Resuscitation. I use my PCW (and I don't de-emphasise the C as Cliff lawson did last issue) for presentations, using graphics and word processing, now in colour (what a great program LocoScript 4 is!).

I find Nik Holmes comment commendable: "we support the PCW for old times sake" but I think Creative Technology owes some consideration to those of us who have supported them in the past with our hard-earned cash. Saying that, I can understand that all businesses have to make a profit.

With regard to Cliff Lawson's remarks, whilst I can see his point, I do not agree with all his comments. There are many people who cannot afford a thousand pounds plus to get into the computer market, but would dearly love to. I have had my 9512 for about 10 years and it will produce anything I need from a computer for work and it will also cover spreadsheets for accounts and even plan road travel via the RoutePlanner program.
Colin Ticehurst, Lower Willington

three inch plea

THIS IS a plea for three inch cover discs. I have a spare 8512 and a good stock of 3" discs and am unlikely to change to 3.5".

Please consider the point that it is hardly more expensive for people like myself to change to a PC than buy 3.5" drives. The logic of this is that the issue of 3.5" cover discs would encourage people to stick with the PCW; which is what you want.

Congratulations on Issue 8. I best appreciate Kathleen Thorpe's down-to-earth style of writing. There is just a wee touch of showing off in some of the other articles.
James Newby, Norwich

PCW Today: We would love to be able to provide 3" cover discs, but the process is very expensive and tricky - there are two formats of 3" disc for a start. And remember - PcW 16 users don't get a cover-disc either. On the plus side, the price of 3.5" drives is dropping and you can pick one up now for less than £50.

Once the introduction of cover-discs has settled down however, we may well reconsider introducing 3" discs.

extra protextion

IN THE last issue (Winter '97) you printed a letter from Brian Watson of Protext Software and as a Protext user I have to agree with what he says. I also use LocoScript and find that it too has its advantages - particularly in its Layout features, and now the use of scalable fonts.

Protext for me scores, not in two-column printing, which is, after all, a specialist use, but in the ease and speed with which you can get words and ideas onto the screen - and subsequently onto the page. This is at the expense of automatic formatting of text. Or, put another way, LocoScript automatically formats text at the expense of speed.

Protext has other touches like the use of [ALT] A to transpose two characters, and the fact that wherever the cursor is on the screen, that is where the next keystroke will appear.

However the main advantage for me is to be able to have two documents in memory at the same time and to be able to swap between them at a number of keystrokes. And also the ability to be able to mark a block in one and insert it in the other by keying [ALT] Y (to change documents) and then [ALT] O to insert the marked block.

I use this a lot, in fact I always load a document which I call TEMPNTS, as well as the document I want to work on. This means that if I think of something I have to do, or have and idea which does not immediately fit in, I key in [ALT] Y and make a note of the idea or reminder. Then its simply [ALT] Y again and I'm back where I left off. No searching around for pen and paper, I don't even take my eyes off the screen. It's as simple as that.

Having endorsed Protext may I now say that I enjoy *PCW Today* very much and appreciate the work that you and the Production Team put in to make it so interesting and really helpful, so that we no longer feel isolated.
Tom Wright, Nottingham

PCW Today: The process of using two documents at once in Protext was way ahead of its time. It is now commonly referred to as multi-tasking and was classed a new feature in Windows 95!

The argument between Protext and LocoScript users looks set to rage on. In an attempt to settle the matter we intend to take up Brian's suggestion and run an extensive comparative feature in the future. Why not write and tell us what is your favourite word processor and why.

Get your letters in order!

The fifth part of Rod Shinkfield's tutorial explains the process of making templates

IN previous tutorials, we have learnt how to organise LocoScript letter discs. Our next task will be to create a TEMPLATE.STD for these letter discs.

As the memory (M:) drive is faster to work in and helps to reduce wear and tear on your machine, we'll use that. Press [C] to open a document in drive M: and name it TEMPLATE.STD. If there's already a TEMPLATE.STD in group 0 of the drive, avoid one overwriting the other by opening the document in another group, name the document as EMPLATE.STD, replacing the 'T' later.

Hold down [SHIFT] and press [f4] to reveal the size, pitch and spacing menu. I've chosen for the example layout: Character pitch PS, Line pitch Auto and my favourite font of Courier point 11. You can, of course, use any font and size you wish as, naturally, once you have become familiar with creating a TEMPLATE.STD you will want to alter the letter's layout to suit you.

Next hold down [SHIFT] and press [f2], [ENTER] to accept New layout. Set the left margin at position 10, while the right margin has been set at position 85. Also, five simple tabs have been placed at five position intervals. Now set up the text for your standard letter. Include your name, address, telephone number and "Dear" as well as a Right Aligned line for the date. This completes our special TEMPLATE.STD.

A copy of the newly created TEMPLATE.STD must be put into group 0 of all four letter discs (remember to add the "T" to the name if necessary.).

From now on, when opening a document to write a letter on any one of your letter discs, the TEMPLATE.STD residing in each disc's group 0 will ensure the letter's layout is there ready and waiting for you to begin.

Press [C] to open a new document and type in the letter's filename, ie, PCWAPR12 96, and then press [ENTER].

Rather than using the cursor keys to move labouriously around the screen, try the following quick keying, which with practise will become second nature to you: Press the [PARA] key twice (which will drop the cursor down to the date line). Press [EOL] once (which will jump the cursor to cover the return marker shown far right of the screen and you can type in the date.

Because there isn't a comma after the saluation (ie, Dear), pressing the [PARA] key twice will jump the cursor from the date position to land one space to the right-hand space of the Dear. Type in the name of the person to whom you are writing the letter, ending with a comma. If you now press [RETURN] twice it will drop the cursor two lines down.

The [TAB] key can be pressed to move the cursor until it has been indented, finishing somewhere near or below the salutation comma (a position governed by the five simple tabs set in the layout and which, naturally, depends on the length of the name or title following Dear).

Having finished writing your letter, it must be closed. Pressing several [RETURN]s will drop the cursor two or three lines down.

If your letter's salutation began with a person's personal name, or job title, ie, Dear Editor, press [PASTE] and then [S] which should put the phrase "Yours sincerely" at the bottom of your letter.

More quick keying is to jump the cursor to cover the letter Y by holding down [SHIFT] + [ALT] and pressing the [LINE] key. Now hold down [+] (the set-on key found left of the space bar) and press [C] and [ENTER] to centre "Yours sincerely".

If your letter is to a Dear Sir, Madam, or a formal title rather than a personal name, press [PASTE] and [F] for Yours faithfully. If Yours sincerely or Yours faithfully fails to appear, your LocoScript Users Handbook will tell you how to change and save phrases of your choice.

Using key combinations to insert phrases or move around the screen is worth practising.

To create files to address envelopes: the envelopes: the LocoScript User Guide describes labelling methods more comprehensively than I can cover here. So how have I managed to address envelopes on an inkjet?

Our first example will be printing addresses on A4 sized 325mm x 229mm (12 3/4ins x 9ins) manilla envelopes, (C4s). Such large envelopes are printed short side first, like 44 cut-sheet paper.

My C4 envelope addressing file's layout shows a left margin at 45, right margin at 85. (+Pltch PS) (LPitch Auto) and courier point 11, plus 22 [RETURN] markers. Save this file as ENVELOPE.C4.

Now try it out: With a C4 envelope correctly positioned, which depends on your type of printer. Open your ENVELOPE.C4 file. Press [PARA] and the cursor will drop down to the bottom of the returns and be ready for you to begin typing in (or block inserting) the name and address. Once done, use Save and Print to print out the envelope.

Add returns to move address downwards, lengthen the left margin to move the address towards the right. Once satisfied, delete address and resave the file. Put a copy of ENVELOPE.C4 on group 7 on all four letter discs.

More on envelopes next time.

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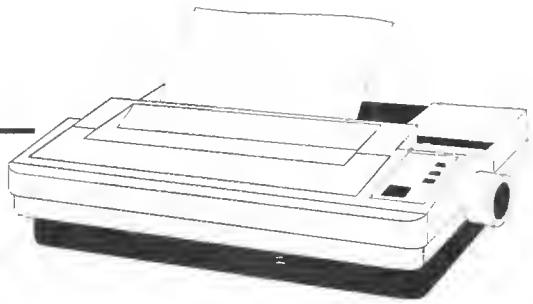

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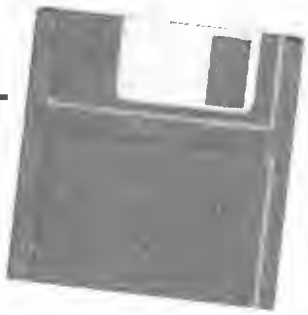

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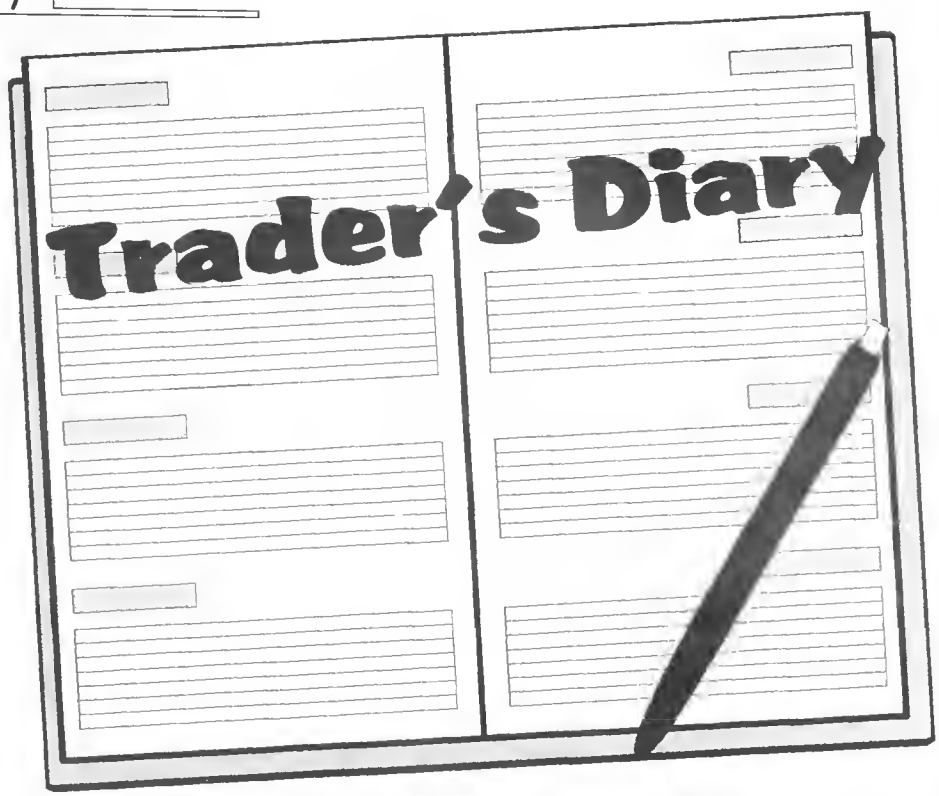
Stephen Denson explains why PCW users get a much better service than their friends with the hi-tech PCs



Are you Being Well Served?

I SOMETIMES wonder whether PCW owners fully appreciate the friendly, helpful service they generally receive from their specialist suppliers!

TV consumer programs such as Watchdog often show computer companies in a very bad light, and deservedly so, when they offer such appalling support. We are talking about some of the giant high street chains and mail order houses here who expect customers to pay up to £2000 for a system and then provide no solutions when these poor people hit problems.

A familiar complaint is not being able to get the printer to communicate with the PC, a drawback as old as the micro industry itself and one which the PCW solved years ago with its 'one-plug' concept.

Picture the scene. You get all the boxes unpacked and the components connected, switch on and...nothing useful happens. You try to print a document but the printer doesn't want to know. So you pick up the phone and dial the helpline number - for which you have the privilege of paying 60p a minute, even though you have just bought the machine - yet the line is constantly engaged.

It's no good going back to the shop, they won't help you as they are involved in selling another machine to the next customer. And, if you purchased your PC by mail order then you don't have this option anyway. You just have to wait until you can get through, which can take days. When you finally do, you may be talking to a Sharon or Tracy who know next to nothing about computers and keep you 'on hold' at your vast expense whilst they supposedly search for a solution. Your frustration grows as you listen to muzak.

The above may portray a nightmare scenario but it is all too real for many users. Several years ago I supplied a local businessman with his first computer, a cheap second-hand PC for which

I customised an accounts package for his company. It worked without a blip for three years or so, when he was finally 'persuaded' by his contemporaries and accountant that the system was too old and he really must update to the latest Pentium PC with all the bells and whistles. At the same time he 'upgraded' to a very expensive top-of-the-range accounts package which was going to solve all his problems and presumably revolutionise his business.

Sadly, however, the new software has proved too complex for him and the new system crashes with regularity. He has had to return to the old PC in order to keep his business going!

All this is not meant to suggest that we should all adopt a luddite attitude towards new technology. After all, if there were no progress then I wouldn't be typing this column into LocoScript 3 on a PcW 10, I'd still be using LocoScript 1 on a PCW 8256!

The point I am making is that there is too much of a naive belief in 'magic boxes' and that, if you buy a computer of any age, new or old, that you just power-up and everything is done for you. Sorry, but you have to work at it.

This is not to excuse shoddy support of the type offered by some of the 'big boys' who provide ten times more phone lines for sales than they do for back-up. I would merely request that you, dear *PCW Today* reader, consider what fine service you get from the surviving PCW companies, who often go well beyond the call of duty to help.

We get calls every week from disgruntled Amstrad owners who expect Alan Sugar's firm to provide free support for computers which in some cases are over a decade old! That is just not being realistic. Even if Amstrad were able to say: "Yes madam, take the machine to our dealer Jones & Co in the high street who can fix it", would the customer agree to pay commercial repair rates?

One of the funniest calls I ever took was from a lady who was ringing on behalf of her boss. He'd heard that Amstrad had just won a court case against an American drive manufacturer and he wanted to know how much compensation he could expect. For what, I asked? Well, he'd used a PCW 8512 in the office for ten years and one of the disc drives had just packed up.

The lady was surprised when I told her that the legal action involved hard drives as fitted to some PCs and that, in any case, a computer is usually covered by a maximum 12-month warranty. This was I am sure a genuine call.
I have many more such comic-calls to relate in the future!

So exactly what sort of support should one expect? Well, as far as software is concerned if you buy a commercial package (not shareware) then the publisher will normally offer free back-up for an initial period following purchase. This varies between 30-90 days. Thereafter, you will be expected either to pay a fee for on-going support, usually per annum, or you may be given a telephone "hotline" number which is usually charged at premium rate from which the supplier obviously gets a cut.

"Cherish your remaining Amstrad suppliers"

The latter option is not so bad provided you talk to staff who know the product and are usually able to pinpoint your problem within a few minutes. A shining example of this are the lads and lasses in attendance on LocoScript's help-desk who demonstrate an admirable understanding of their own products, which is how it should be.

But why should you pay anything extra at all, you might ask. After all you bought the program and surely that should entitle you to "free lifetime support". Well, hold on a mo. 'FLS' as we will abbreviate it, looks too good to be true and in most cases it probably is. The plain fact is that a lifetime guarantee of any description, for example on double glazing units, is worthless if the company goes bust or disappears after installation.

Look around today for the software suppliers who boasted FLS on PCW programs a few years ago when the market still had commercial strength. You won't find much trace of them these days and very few (if any) are advertising in *PCW Today*.

Will that nice man you spoke to about your brand new accounts package in 1995 still be around in 2001 when all your entries are being sorted into reverse order? Probably not and that is because time marches on and people, even software suppliers, need to eat.

"Free" support has to be funded by current sales and if a package is no longer selling in large numbers then there is simply no margin to continue this service. Even Creative Technology, makers of some of the greatest PCW products ever, admit that they are only supporting the machine for "old times sake".

A trawl through the back numbers of old PCW magazines (there were no less than four at one time!), shows page after page of advertisers who have long since departed the Amstrad scene or moved on to richer pastures. But even if you manage to contact such a firm in their new guise as a PC supplier, they are hardly likely to embrace you as a long-lost friend if you are seeking PCW support.

The current crop of Amstrad specialists still offer support because they love the old machines. The get-rich-quick-would-be tycoons are long gone. So my advice is to be kind to these survivors. Be prepared to talk to the occasional answer phone and to wait a while for a reply to your letter. Resources are fairly limited.

Finally, cherish your remaining Amstrad suppliers. As with the village post office or corner shop it really is a case of 'use it or lose it'.

Graphics for beginners

P.D. Blake continues his MicroDesign series for first time users

THIS issue we will be taking a brief tour through the graphics section of MicroDesign 3. Enter MicroDesign and press [G] from the main layout screen to move into graphics.

Now, if you look at the EXTRA menu in the bottom right corner, you will see two modes: 1:1 and 2:1. First we will deal with 2:1 as we are already in it.

From 2:1 graphics you can load shades and fonts, write text, draw shapes and lines and use blocks. As a simple exercise, we will do something that incorporates them all. to begin with we will load a font.

Insert your library disc and press [f3]. Now you will see a window at the bottom of the screen. In the window there are three font names, numbered (oddly enough) 1,2 and 3. Use the cursor keys to pick one. The one you select will be replaced by the one you load.

Press [ENTER] and the window will change again to give you a list of all the fonts on your library disc (there should be quite a few). Each one has a number, which refers to the number of the font. Again use the arrow keys to choose one and press [ENTER] to select it. The font you have chosen will now be loaded.

Now to load a shade, with the library disc still in the drive, press [f5] and choose a shade as you did with the font (easy isn't it), then press [ENTER].

The next task is to draw a shape. There are two ways of doing this, you can either press [S] and choose a shape from the menu that appears or you can simply press [R] for rectangle, [T] for triangle, [C] for circle, [E] for eclipse or [D] for diamond. Use either method to select a shape and it will appear on the screen. You can use the arrow keys to resize the shape. When resizing you can move around the points of the shape by pressing the spacebar, thus enabling you to stretch and shrink from each angle. Once you have got the shape to the size you want, just press [ENTER].

Whilst sizing the shape, you can also use the EXTRA keys to change the way the lines of the shape are drawn, ie: dotted, thicker and so on. You can also decide if you want your shape filled, with either black or a selected shade. To set the type of shade, just press [RELAY] and use the arrow keys to move around the window that should appear at the bottom of your screen, pressing [ENTER] to confirm. If you make a mess, just press [WORD] and the shape will disappear and you can have another go.

Next we will draw a few lines. To do this, simply put the cursor where you want the line to start and press [L], now you can use EXTRA keys to change the type of line drawn, as you did when drawing the shape. Press the cursor keys and the line will stretch in any direction that you want it. Press [ENTER] when you are happy.

No to write some text with the font you have just loaded. Move the cursor to where you want the text to start. You can move it again later. Press [W] and start typing. You can use the EXTRA keys to change the font and style. To leave the writing mode, just press [EXIT].

Next we will try a block. Just press [UNIT] and place the box which appears over the shape and text and lines you have just drawn. As with shape resizing, use the spacebar and [ENTER] to alter the size of the block. On screen, at the top right will be a small menu with erase, invert and copy. For the moment we will deal with invert. Press [f5] and watch what happens.

Suddenly the picture should change and everything that was white becomes black and vice versa.

These are an example of the things you can do in 2:1 graphics. Zooming in to 1:1, the picture looks a lot bigger, and you can also do much more.

To enter graphics 1:1, press [EXTRA] + [CUT]. At first glance, very little - except for the size of the picture - has changed, but if you look at the menu own the right, all the choices that were faded in 2:1 are now black. That means that you can use them.

Let's fill the shape you made with a shade. Press [RELAY] and select a shade as before. Now put the cursor inside the shape and press [F]. In this mode you can fill with either white, black or a shade. Use the EXTRA keys to choose (if you get it wrong, just press [WORD] and try again). Then press [ENTER] and watch as the inside of your shape turns black and then switches to the shade you chose.

In this mode you can also sketch "free-hand" as it were. Press the spacebar and move the cursor with the arrow keys. If you choose the black box from the EXTRA menu, you will see that the cursor draws as it moves. In white, it erases.

From here you can also load CUT files. Cuts are pictures and are loaded in the same way as AREAs, described in an earlier tutorial.

The BLOCK function in 1:1 is different from the one previously described. Using the EXTRA keys you can flip the picture around, try it and find out. You can also resize the block or even save it (like a block of text in LocoScript.) I will leave you to experiment with this function as to take you through all the possibilities would take several pages.

Perhaps the most significant function in 1:1 graphics is the paint function. To use paint, just press [P]. In the [EXTRA] menu you will see a cursor shape and two arrows. Using [EXTRA] and the arrow keys, the cursor shape can be changed, altering the size and shape of your brush. Also the paint setting can be set to white, black or a shade. Hold down the space bar and move the cursor around, painting as you go.

Lastly in 1:1 is the Zoom function. This allows you to zoom in close on an area of the picture for fine editing pixel by pixel, or dot by dot. Press [Z] and position the box which appears where you want it, then press [ENTER].

You will now have a very close-up picture. use the EXTRA keys to edit, if you want to, using the same technique used in painting. If you make a mess, just press [R] and the picture will be refreshed to its original state.

Well, I hope you followed all that. If you didn't, then read it again and experiment. The best way to learn is by having a go yourself. And remember, if you don't get it right first time, there's always the magic [WORD].

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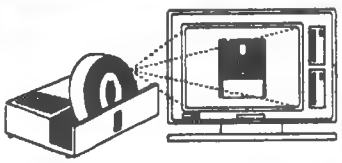
Desktop Publishing means combining your word-processor text with pictures and diagrams to create spectacular pages like these - this advertisement was created and printed using *MicroDesign3* and a Bubblejet printer. *MicroDesign3* lets you lay out your text in columns, combine it with graphics, and even draw your own pictures and diagrams straight onto your PCW's screen.

MD3 is a powerful program, but it is also simple to learn: PCW Plus Magazine gave *MD3* five marks out of five for *"ease of use"* in their review. The *MD3* package comes complete with a comprehensive Beginner's Tutorial, and we also provide a Technical Support hotline free of charge between 4pm and 7pm every weekday.

Micro Display v3.0



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- ❑ *On-screen alphabetic listing of disk files;*
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- ❑ *Fast display of all CUT / MDA / MDP images on disk;*
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- ❑ *Special effects for fading & scrolling between images;*
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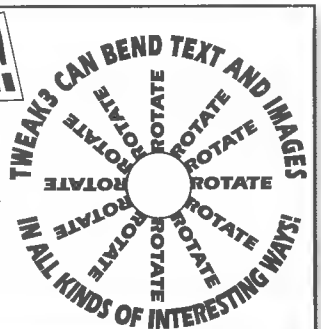
Tweak3

ZOOSH!!



TWEAK 3 is a powerful graphics manipulation program which can transform your MicroDesign text and pictures in all kinds of spectacular ways - these illustrations show only a fraction of what can be done with this remarkable program. Tweak3 accepts images from StopPress and MicroDesign2 as well as MD3, and when used in conjunction with the Network, it becomes instantly accessible from within MD3.

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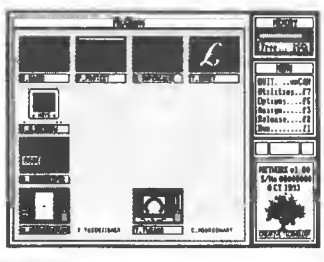

Please Note:
The Network is compatible with most CP/M programs and versions, but you are welcome to contact us with queries about compatibility.

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PCW Software (3" or 3.5")

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MD2-MD3 Upgrade (Registered Users)	£29.95
The Network (requires 512K memory)¢	£25.00
Font & Shade Designer	£25.00
Tweak¢	£25.00
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MD3 Extra Fonts Disks (each)	£16.00
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CREATIVE TECHNOLOGY

This advertisement was designed and printed AT THIS SCALE using a PCW8512 with 1Mb memory, MicroDesign and a Bubblejet printer.

It's not impossible!

Rod Shinkfield works miracles and creates a database for your '16

THOUGH the PcW 16 comes without a database program akin to MasterFile 8000 or LocoFile on the older PCWs, it is possible to create a database of sorts.

You can, for instance, put two HD floppy discs aside, renaming the first disc's 16 folder's: FOLDER01, FOLDER02, FOLDER03, as AAA, BBB, CCC, and so on to PPP. with the second disc taking QQQ to ZZZ. The remaining folders on the second disc could be used for other things.

If you wish to save an item of information under the letter D. for instance, simply open the folder DDD and add the item of information alphabetically. This semi-manual system of filing information, lists, etc, in folders named AAA, BBB, CCC, and so on, mimics the system of basic office filing of hard copy.

The two discs can be likened to filing cabinets, while each folder is like a draw of a filing cabinet, and the alphabetic sorting of the various items to be filed away, can be likened to the indexed compartments often found in the draw of many office filing cabinets.

Another method to create a database is to use the PcW's simple database - ADDRESS BOOK. But first, a word of warning - before working with the files found in the Cabinet system folder make sure you use "Backup Cabinet to Disc" (and put the disc safely to one side) before going any further.

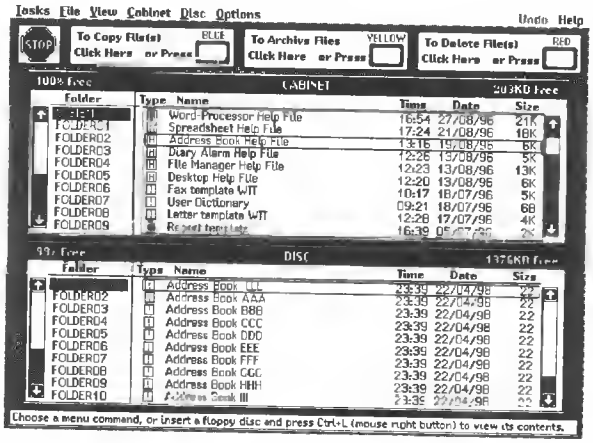
While a system file can be copied to a disc folder, they cannot be deleted or moved from the Cabinet system folder unless first made unprotected. System files are protected and marked by an exclamation mark set in a small box at the beginning of the system filename. Unless you know what you are doing avoid altering such files. If you do get in to trouble, simply use "Backup Disc to Cabinet" to restore your PcW 16 to its original state.

With your PcW 16's system and folder contents safely put to one side, we can begin: As you can see in the screen shot, the system folder must be shown on the Cabinet's panel (see the PcW 16 user guide for details on revealing system files).

First, open the Address Book (from the Desktop screen, or click on Tasks, shown at top left of screen). Delete any entries to empty the file and add AAA as the first entry before closing the Address Book.

Return to the File Manager screen and copy the Address Book shown in the Cabinet panel , and put a copy in to the Disc panel below. Click this copy so it is still selected (by a black bar) then click File and select Rename file.

Rename the selected Address Book file in the Disc panel as Address Book: AAA. The easiest way to do this when the copy file dialog appears is to first press the right



cursor, which will de-select (ie remove the black bar) and then press the space bar to put in a space, add AAA (saves typing in the whole filename) and tick OK/ . The new file Address Book AAA is added to the disc panel.

Click Tasks and choose to open the Address Book, which will show AAA as the first entry. Delete the AAA and add BBB before clicking [Tasks] to move back to the File Manager.

The Address Book shown in the Cabinet panel should now contain the BBB entry. Copy Address Book from the Cabinet system folder to the disc panel where it will take top place above Address Book AAA. Rename this second Address Book as Address Book BBB, and Address Book BBB will be placed in the Disc panel below. When you next open the Address Book shown in the Cabinet panel the only entry will be the last entry used - ie, BBB.

Delete the BBB and add CCC, ready to copy the Address Book to the disc panel and rename Address Book, as Address Book CCC, when it will then take its place below. And so it goes on until there are 26 (A-Z) Address Book nnn's as in the screenshot.

We now need to use the database: Open the File Manager and log-in the disc which contains the databases - Address Book nnn.

With the Cabinet system folder on show, rename the Address Book nnn you wish to use in the disc. ie, Address Book DDD by simply deleting the DDD.

Copy the file, now named simply as Address Book, to the Cabinet system folder, where you will be asked whether you wish to overwrite the Address Book currently held in the system folder.

If you now use [Tasks] to close the File Manager and open the Address Book, the first entry shown should show DDD. You are now in a database for items related to the letter D, and in which you could store lists or information, etc, using the various lines shown in Address Book. It is possible to re-index (see PcW 16 user guide for details) and call at least four Address Book fields/items to the screen to show a selection of saved data, or view the entire page.

After finishing using the Address Book nnn databases (all of whom are best saved on a disc rather than taking up space in the Cabinet), you must copy back your original Address Book, which holds your addresses and telephone numbers, etc, a copy of which should be on the "Backup Cabinet to Disc" disc last used.

Simply copy a copy of the original across from the "Backup Cabinet to Disc" to overwrite the Address Book (which will be the last database used, of course) and so restore your valuable addresses and telephone numbers to the Cabinet.

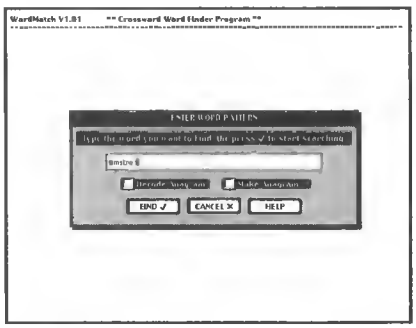
One thing you could do before altering the original Address Book as described above, would be to put a copy of the file in to another folder, for later retrieval at the end of using the database.

A way with words

Did you know that your PcW 16 came with free external software?

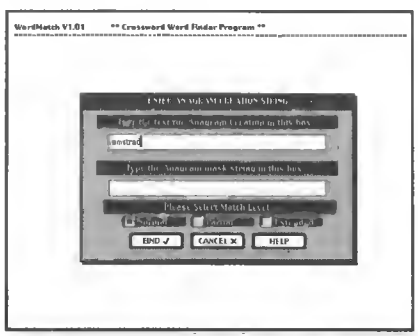
THE BIGGEST moan among PcW 16 owners is the lack of external software. To date, only two pieces of software have emerged leaving users understandably disgruntled.

Well, there are actually more than two bits of software. If you have a recent version of the '16 Rescue Disc, you may have come across two extra free programs. One of these is a shopping list and we'll look at that in detail next time. The other is a great little package for solving anagrams, and it's actually one of the best implemented packages of its kind I've seen.



To run the program, simply put your Rescue Disc in the drive, pull down the Tasks menu and select "Run External Program". You will be confronted with a new menu, change to disc and then choose the Word Match option.

You can save the program to the Cabinet, but I wouldn't advise it. That's a lot of lost space for a minuscule saving in time. The fist time you load Word Match from disc, the dictionary files have to be loaded into memory, this take a couple of minutes, but once they've loaded they stay there until you exit the program.

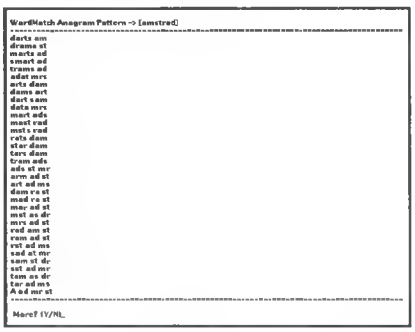


Word Match actually has three major functions. It will solve anagrams, make anagrams or solve crossword puzzles.

Let's deal with these one at a time. The first is the simplest. Many magazines and newspapers have anagram puzzles, and this neat function will help you to cheat. Type in your word pattern in the box provided, then click on the "Decode Anagram" check box. The program will search through its substantial 350k word list, and come up with any words that use all of the letters you have selected.

Now, if you want to solve that crossword clue that has been causing so much grief, you can also use "Decode Anagram" to do this for you. Type in all the letters that you know, substituting the blanks with question marks. Word Match will then come up with a selection of possibilities for you to choose from.

The third function and probably the most fun is "Make Anagram". You may edit a newsletter or magazine, if so anagrams make very easy fillers. Anagrams are also great for a laugh among friends. Type someone's name in here and you can get some very funny results.



I tried doing a search on that well-know Amstrad celebrity - Alan Michael Sugar - the '16 certainly produced some weird and wonderful results. His name, once the word basher has worked its wonders, became "A seagull chairman", or "Screaming au, la, lah!" and those are some of the more sane selections. They descended to the downright surreal, "Ha, a geranium calls", or even "Ha, a singular camel".

And I'm sure that the Tottenham chairman will be delighted to learn that his name is an exact anagram of "Uh, magical Arsenal!". He'll probably sue for that one!

But a word of warning, watch out, Word Match has a nasty habit of churning out fairly libellous statements! Beware of evil temptations.

The "Make Anagram" function has some fine-tuning features that help make it a top class utility. There is the "Anagram Mask text" option. Type in here any word you want to appear in every anagram. For example, if you were looking for anagrams of "PCW Today", and you wanted them all to contain the word "day", you would type that here and the program will oblige.

You can also set the Match level. Most of the time you will use the Normal option, but you may wish to see partial anagrams that do not use all the letters, if so, select the appropriate box.

When you are hunting for anagrams, the PcW churns them out fairly slowly, but that is just about the right speed for you to read each one. Once the screen is filled, the program will pause and ask whether you wish to continue. You can also press [STOP] at any time to abort the matching. If you have entered a long word or sentence, there are bound to be literally hundreds of anagrams, so be prepared to wait some time for the best ones. The whole process is strangely addictive.

The whole program is not bad at all considering it cost you nothing. There's on-line help, as with all PcW 16 programs, and although the setup is basic, it is very easy to use and has the comfortable familiarity of all PcW 16 programs.

So why not get out that Rescue Disc again and sample the delights hidden in the depths of its tracks and sectors!

The turtle lives!

F.W. Manders introduces a seldom-used programming language

LIKE BASIC, LOGO is an interpreted language; which means that, to write or run a Logo Program the Logo Interpreter (that is LOGO.COM) must first be loaded.

If your PCW boots up from a double density disk, such as the 3.5 inch ones used in the later models, or the 3inch DD ones used in the PCW9512, all you need to do is switch on, insert your CP/M disc and, when the >A prompt appears type in LOGO and press [RETURN].

If yours boots up from a single density disk (that is, the ones you need to turn round to access the files on side B) please follow the instructions in the Logo Section of the PCW 8256/8512 Manual, book 1.

When Logo is ready to use, the screen will clear and a '?' will appear in the top left hand corner.

If this is your first try at using Logo, you might like to try some of the simple exercises in the manual. But I think it will not be long before you want to try out a simple program.

The accompanying listing is made up of a number of 'procedures', which are roughly equivalent to Subroutines in BASIC. Each of the first seven of these procedures can be used as either individual programs or as part of a larger program.

To try out the first one type 'ed "square' and press [RETURN]. This will call up the editor, with:

```
to square
end
```

already in place.

Move the cursor down by pressing the down arrow, then press [RETURN] to make a blank line and the up arrow to put the cursor on it, ready to copy in the rest of the procedure. It can all be on one line if you wish, but I prefer to keep program lines reasonably short, as they are easier to read that way.

Having typed the procedure in, press [EXIT] to leave the editor and, when the '?' appears, test the procedure by typing 'square' and pressing [RETURN].

Do the same for the other 6 shapes, testing each one as you finish it. At any time, when the '?', (the Logo prompt) is displayed, you can save everything in the program area by typing 'save "filename' and pressing [RETURN], where 'filename' is whatever name you want to give the file.

If I were you I think I would wait until all seven shapes are working properly and then save then save them as 'shapes1'. The filetype LOG will be added by Logo.

The first line of each of the above procedures clears the graphics screen and sets the starting position so that the finished shape will be roughly central.

See if you can make sense of the instructions for drawing the shapes.

Now key in the procedures, 'rec' and 'demo', which are designed to demonstrate how a larger program can be built up of small procedures, calling each other as required.

The items after the semicolons are remarks (like REM in Basic). I have included them to explain what the procedures do. You can miss them out if you like. Save this as 'shapes2', then test it by keying in 'demo' and pressing [RETURN]. It should draw each shape in turn, pausing after each one, before deleting it and drawing the next one.

The procedure 'test', gives an alternative way of displaying the shapes, which calls for a response from the user. It also demonstrates how more than one program can make use of the same procedures. Again you need not type in the items after the semicolons (the remarks). But notice that the lines ending with ';INDENT' must start with at least one space. This is because they are continuations of something within square brackets. Save the completed program as 'shapes', or whatever name you fancy and test it with 'test [RETURN]'.

These programs may not be very useful, though if you have small children they might find them amusing; but they do demonstrate some of the features of Logo. If you are keen to learn how to program in Logo I suggest that you study this listing, in conjunction with the Logo section of your PCW instruction manual, as a means of learning about the use of the Logo Primitives it uses.

```
to square
cs setpos [-100 0]
repeat 4 [fd 200 rt 90]
end
to oblong
cs setpos [-100 0]
repeat 2 [fd 100 rt 90 fd 200 rt 90]
end
to triangle
cs setpos [-100 0] rt 30
repeat 3 [fd 200 rt 120]
end
```

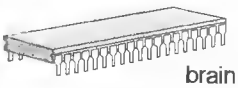
```
to pentagon
cs setpos [-74 0] lt 18
repeat 5 [fd 150 rt 72]
end
to circle
cs lt 88
repeat 90 [fd 4 rt 4]
end
to hexagon
cs setpos [-60 0] lt 30
repeat 6 [fd 120 rt 60]
end
to octagon
cs setpos [-40 0] lt 45
repeat 8 [fd 80 rt 45]
end
to rec ;recycle acts as a short delay or pause, ct clears text screen
recycle ct ;used in the demo procedure
end
to demo ;demonstrate each shape in turn and display its name
ct ht
square pr [Square] rec
triangle pr [Triangle] rec
oblong pr [Oblong] rec
pentagon pr [Pentagon] rec
circle pr [Circle] rec
hexagon pr [Hexagon] rec
octagon pr [Octagon] rec
home st ts ct
end
to test ;draw shapes in random order and ask user to identify each one
make "nms [Square Triangle Oblong Pentagon Circle Hexagon Octagon]
make "r shuffle [1 2 3 4 5 6 7]
make "x 1 make "s 0
label "loop ct ht make "i item :x :r
if :i = 1 [square] if :i = 2 [triangle] if :i = 3 [oblong]
if :i = 4 [pentagon] if :i = 5 [circle]
if :i = 6 [hexagon] if :i = 7 [octagon]
pr [Press the number for this shape]
pr [] pr [1 Square : 2 Triangle : 3 Oblong :
 4 Pentagon : 5 Circle : 6 Hexagon : 7 Octagon] ;INDENT
label "xx make "in rc if :in < 1 [go "xx]
if :in > 7 [go "xx] pr []
if :in = :i [type [Yes] type char 32 pr item :i :nms make "s :s + 1]
if not :in = :i [type [No] type char 32 type item :i :nms
 type char 32 type [not] type char 32 pr item :in :nms] ;INDENT
pr [] type [Score] type char 32 type :s type char 32
type [out of] type char 32 type :x recycle
make "x :x + 1
if :x < 8 [go "loop]
if :s = :x - 1 [type char 32 type char 27 type [p]
 type char 32 pr [VERY GOOD!] type char 27 type [q]] ;INDENT
recycle home st ts ct
end
```

20 things you never knew about the PCW!

David Landers on the trail of fascinating trivia and amazing facts

The PCW was meant to have a vertical monitor - with the same (portrait) proportions as a piece of A4 paper. This would have been very sensible indeed for a word-processor, but cost estimates for the non-standard screen configuration proved too high.

Similarly, it was intended that the dot-matrix printer would be genuinely 'built-in' - actually moulded into the top of the monitor casing. Unfortunately, the design prototype tended to overheat so this idea was also dropped.



The Z80 central processing unit - brain of every PCW - was already obsolete by the time that it was specified. Zylog's venerable, 8-bit cpu was chosen in preference to a newer, 16-bit processor purely on the basis of price: Amstrad paid just £ 1 per chip!

The first version of LocoScript - bundled with most PCW models - became the most widely used (non-corporate) word-processing program in the world. Locomotive Software didn't benefit, though, as they'd written it on a 'flat-fee, no royalties' contract.

Amstrad assumed that the PCW would be used as a typewriter substitute - a part-exchange allowance was given if you traded in your old typewriter. This explains LocoScript's 'Direct Printing' mode - though, ironically, it wasn't a particularly popular feature.

When the PCW8256 was announced, its selling price of £459 (VAT inclusive, with printer and software) was less than the cost of a word-processing program alone for other microcomputers of the day. And the 8256's price would be substantially reduced when the 8512 arrived.

The very first PCW hard-disc was a 20Mb model called the 'AmStore'. At nearly £ 1000, it cost over twice as much as the computer itself. But it was intended for serious business use, where it could act as an office information hub - managing data for up to 120 connected PCWs!

Low purchase cost and flexibility of programming meant that the PCW found applications outside the home or office. Special interfaces were available that allowed Amstrad's 'typewriter' to control scientific equipment and precision-engineering machinery.

The Isenstein Odessa was a portable, battery-powered PCW that had been repackaged to fit inside a carry-case. Its keyboard was in the lid, which folded down to expose a tiny, 4 inch monitor. Priced at £ 629 (twin drive), it never reached full-scale production.

'Fleet Street Editor', (a popular, early, PCW desktop publishing program), had links to a real Fleet Street editor. It was originally published by MirrorSoft - part of the Mirror Group of companies, formerly controlled by the infamous Robert Maxwell.

Alan Michael Sugar Trading was the original name of Amstrad in the 70s. The legendary Mr Sugar first started selling electrical equipment from the back of his car around London markets. His first product was a Hi Fi that was, in his own words: "appalling".

Isenstein who were based in Wales seemed to enjoy customising the PCW. As well as the Odessa, they produced The Black Stripe. A 30 megabyte hard disc, one megabyte of RAM and a 24 pin printer all came as standard and the whole thing was finished off in jet-black.

Amstrad had plans in the mid eighties to bring out the first ever colour PCW. Imaginatively code-named "Fred", the machine would have had a full colour screen similar to that on the CPC. Sadly it never took off due to increasing competition from PCs.

The PCW 16 has hidden capabilities that have not yet been utilised. When Amstrad designed the latest incarnation of their popular word processor they included a hard drive interface and an interface for a colour VGA monitor. They also included space for a further 1MB of memory and 1MB of Flash RAM.

Back in 1991 a firm called Oyster launched a unique 'Printa Pen' for the PCW. Amazingly this was a hand-held printer that you actually passed over the page, as you would a scanner. As you might expect, it hardly set the PCW world on fire. There are, perhaps mercifully, no records of sales available.

Amstrad were heavily criticised for not bundling a new version of LocoScript with the PCW 16. However, that was actually the original plan. Amstrad initially approached LocoScript about the project but they declined and suggested that a completely new word processor might be better.

The chairman of Amstrad, Alan Sugar, was the man behind the PCW 8256. It is understood that he devised the concept himself and was heavily involved in the design process. And Mr Sugar still hasn't forgotten his creation - he is listed as being one of the designers of the PCW 16.

MicroDesign, the hugely successful graphics package for the PCW, was not originally a desktop publisher. MicroDesign 1 was produced for the CPC as a electronic circuitry program. Even in MicroDesign2, circuit drawing facilities were included through the 'icons' facility.

One of the oddest PCW software-updates was made by Database Software who released an "enhanced" version of Mini Office Pro Plus. What was the enhancement? Well, they removed two of the major features from the earlier version - a spell checker and thesaurus. Apparently that was an *improvement* because the two modules - released in an earlier update - were so bug-ridden!

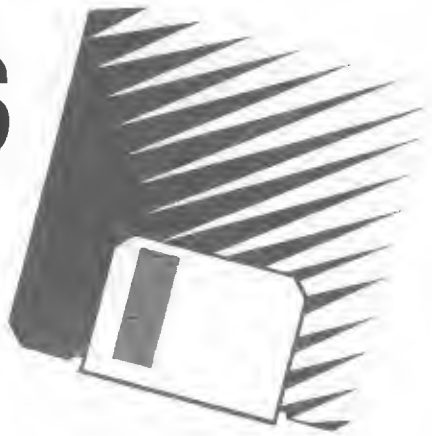
The PCW is best known on the continent by its pet-name of Joyce. This was the name of Alan Sugar's first secretary and for some reason he named the PCW after her. Ironically she had left Amstrad by the time the PCW first hit the high-streets.

The rich and famous have frequently admitted to being PCW fans. Jeffrey Archer, Richard Dimbleby and John Major are several of the many celebrities spotted with Joyce. Meanwhile the PCW has become a star in its own right, appearing on shows as diverse as Doctor Who, The Russ Abbot Show and Hetty Wainthrop Investigates.

Cover Discs

Issue 1, May-Jul 1998

"Feast of Fun"



THE First edition of the *PCW Today* cover disc - only the second PCW magazine cover disc in history - has a light-hearted theme.

The disc is entitled "Feast of Fun" and is intended to liven-up your PCW. There's a selection of great games, from the classic Tetris and Space Invaders to the novel Easter Bunny.

There's also a terrific new font for MicroDesign 3. Old English 66 will be a great addition to your collection. You can also down-load a selection of animal pictures of all sizes, for use with MicroDesign 3 and LocoScript 4.

A curious, but fun utility is Serif CP/M. This program actually changes the usual screen-font in CP/M to a more attractive Serif typeface.

Last, but by no means least are two of the best disc utilities around. DiscTool and DU53 featured in the last issue and now they're yours to own. Try them out, you just might like them!

For more information on the cover disc, put it into your A: or B: drive and type PCWTODAY, then press [RETURN]. You will enter the *PCW Today* cover disc browser. From here you can access two information files, or check a full directory of the disc.

If you have any comments on the cover disc, please let us know. This was our first attempt, so we are bound to have got some things wrong. If you have any suggestions of what to put on future discs, then send them in. We would also welcome any new programs, utilities, graphics or fonts that you may have created. Anything sent in will be considered.

Did you miss this cover disc? If so, just send a cheque or PO for £1.50 to the usual address, quoting "Cover Disc 1".

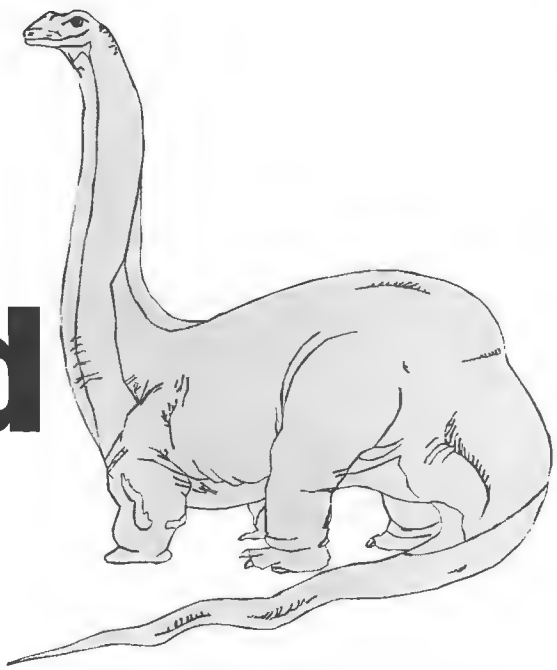
SUBSCRIPTIONS

If you wish to add cover discs to your subscription, simply send £5.00 for a year's supply. Unfortunately we are only able to provide cover discs in 3.5" CP/M format. If you have a PcW 16 or a 3" disc machine, the discs are not suitable.

Your cover disc subscription will run independently of your magazine subscription. But, it is possible to level things up.

Just follow this rule: If you have three editions of *PCW Today* still to come, add £6 to your cover disc subscription. If you have two still to come, add £4 and if you have one to come, add £2. In doing this you will have extended your magazine subscription to the same length as your cover disc subscription. Complicated, but worthwhile!

When CP/M Ruled



Kathleen Thorpe starts her new series on CP/M by providing a quick run-down on the history of the PCW operating system

CP/M STANDS for "Control Program for Microcomputers", it is a disc operating system which controls the storage and retrieval of data files.

It was invented in 1972 by an American student named Gary Kildall, who had completed the program by the end of 1973.

However it wasn't used commercially until 1975 when it was bundled with a few utilities also written by Kildall, one of which was "PIP" - Peripheral Interchange Program.

Kildall was prompted to invent CP/M by the fact that American disc manufacturers had begun to make cheaper floppy disc drives. This did away with the need to have bulky, expensive hard discs to store data on.

When disc prices fell, there was a manufacturing boom, more and more computers were being produced.

The Amstrad PCW is only one of several computers that is CP/M based. It may surprise you to learn that as early as 1976, there was a CP/M based computer that combined both a monitor and a keyboard together. It was created by Lee Felsenstein and Bob Marsh. They called this wondrous machine "SOL".

In the late seventies, a book publisher called Adam Osborne sold his business and ploughed his cash into the computer world. In 1980 he set up a company called "Osborne Computers" and asked Felsenstein and Marsh to design him a portable machine (one of the first) with a full sized keyboard on the inside of the folding lid, twin 5.25" disc drives and a 3" amber glass monitor integrated into its case. The rest of the box contained the processor, driver electronics and main memory.

This computer was based on their earlier "SOL" model and they called it "Osborne 1 Portable", although at 24lbs it wasn't exactly a lightweight. But it did come bundled with over £1000 worth of business software including Word Star, Super Calc, Basic and some CP/M utilities.

"CP/M lives on even in the age of the PC"

This new machine was an immediate and massive success. Perhaps it is safe to say that it revolutionised the way users looked at computers and sparked an interest in the home microcomputer market.

Compared with these machines, the Amstrad PCW is a relative newcomer, with the first PCW 8256 and 8512 models being produced in 1985.

As we all know, Joyce and her sisters went from strength to strength, with the arrival in 1987 of the 9512. This magnificent machine is still as popular today as it was then.

In 1991 Amstrad released two new models in the same year. The PcW 9512+ and 9256 took the PCW into a new era of machines with 3.5" drives.

Unfortunately, MS-DOS became the standard on whch the majority of computer companies based their later models, so by the time the PcW 10 arrived in 1993, CP/M was already a dying trend.

When the PcW 16 was launched in 1996, Amstrad had decided to scrap CP/M for the first time. Programming experts from Amstrad, Creative Technology and other contractors developed a new O/S - Roseanne.

It is interesting to note, that although "SOL" and the "Osborne" are no longer heard of, and the earlier Amstrad CPCs are fading into obscurity, the Amstrad PCW range of computers still using CP/M, are very much alive and kicking and long may it be so.

CP/M lives on even in the age of the PC, and John Elliott's "Joyce" superbly emulates CP/M on the PC.

Got LocoMail?
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Easy to use, no LocoMail knowledge required. Calculate, convert, check your bank balance. Draw charts, graphs and diagrams — and all within the familiar LocoScript environment. Print on any printer, even a 9512 daisywheel.

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DISC 2, Charts & Schedules
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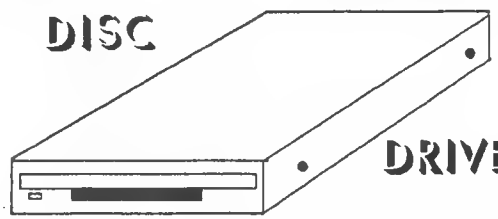

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Belt Up!

When Henry Hale's 8512 stopped working he was forced to open up his beloved PCW and attempt to fix it!

I OWN an Amstrad PCW 8512. This statement is received by school children just as the head of NASA might react when told by the first mate of the Santa Maria that he'd got a new navigational system.

A similar remark to a friendly pensioner is like mentioning to Raymond Blanc you've got a non-stick frying pan.

Ownership of an Amstrad has become a matter of prestige. Just as those of us who bought one of the first Morris Minors swell with pride when we pass one of them scampering down the motorway at a steady 30mph.

So I was sad when my Amstrad started to produce virtual nonsense. Despite verbal threats and periods of abstinence, which previously brought results, it developed a nasty cough. When I switched on, there was a sound like a stationary tube train. I knew it was programming itself for the last rites.

Eventually, threatening messages like "Drive not ready - try again" appeared, followed by an impressive switch of emphasis to 'Drive not ready - cancel operation'.

I had the sensation that behind the screen sat a smiling Sugar Genie, secure in his belief that I was an Arsenal supporter.

My original instruction manual - 700 pages of incomprehensible technical jargon - contained no reference to "Drive not ready".

I suppose computer-literates would have scrapped the old Amstrad in favour of a multi-thousand, three-storey monster capable of telling me in a second how many unripe bananas were produced in Singapore in 1923, in three languages, with accompanying music and pictures of the Spice Girls. I just want to write to Aunty Gladys.

I could have taken it to the local computer repair outfit. "Who sold you this rubbish?" would have been the response.

I couldn't take it to the tip - they would have laughed at my tears.

Village jumble sales are snooty about "faulty electrical equipment".

Then by coincidence, and suspiciously out of the blue, came a packet from LocoScript Software. Just as our wildlife is catered before, I wondered if there was an RSPAO - Royal Society for the Protection of Amstrad Owners.

Their catalogue described a "dirty or tired disc drive". Mine wasn't tired - in fact it sounded suspiciously defunct.

For £17.50, you could receive a new belt (Mr Sugar had omitted to make any spares), instructions for fitting it and a sort of Amstrad WD40. I pondered for five minutes. There was no refund if it didn't work, only discount off a new drive.

I sent off the order and response was immediate. A sheet of instructions, a new belt and cleaning fluid. The instructions were terrifying.

But Amstradders know how to deal with threatening messages and we are well trained to understand when they say "don't drop anything inside the works" or something similar.

They also recommended a soft thick blanket - whether for the computer or for me wasn't clear.

Half an hour's fiddling, including ten minutes panic, and I had unscrewed the case, loosened the drive, and slid the main PCB out of its groove. I didn't know what a PCB was. I presume it was the bit I slid out.

I removed screws and bent the board up to reveal the old belt. It was so stretched it had fallen off. I eased the LED back (what's an LED?), pushed the case back on and sat on the blanket for a rest.

Did you ever change contact points on an old motor? It's not as bad as that. But the joy when I switched on! There was a discreet purring and then - a beautiful, delicious, clear, shining Disc Management screen, as good as new.

The instructions advocated a "few successive DIRs". As I didn't know what they are, I used the cleaning fluid.

LocoScript were efficient, helpful and instructive (apart from PCB, LED and DIR).

I now boast to my computer-literate friends: "I took my computer to pieces and fitted a new belt". It's like advising Richard Branson to take up ballooning.

If you fancy relating tales of your own adventures with the Amstrad, we wholeheartedly encourage you to do so.

Submissions should be between 750-1000 words long and sent to us at "My PCW", PCW Today, 150 Oxford Road, Middlesbrough, Teesside TS5 5EL.

THE DISC DRIVE

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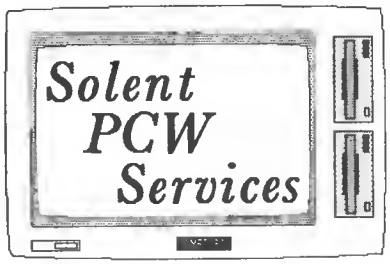

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The 3rd Annual PCW Today Awards

Joyce '98

IT'S THAT time of year again. The glittering PCW Today awards are just around the corner, and now's the chance to make your voice heard.

For the second year running we're letting you, the readers, decide. Simply tick your choices in each category, then send the form to us. If you don't want to spoil your copy of *PCW Today*, write your nominations on a piece of paper.

As an extra incentive, if your votes match the popular choice, you could win £25, to spend how you like.

Be careful with your vote, the result is all-important, as it will act as a guide to fellow PCW users. If you have no preference in a certain category, just leave it blank and skip to the next one.

This year we are anticipating a big response and Joyce '98 promises to be the most definitive showing of opinion by PCW users. The more votes, the closer to true public opinion we get.

Please *do* vote, we greatly value your opinion, and this is one of the few times that the unsung heroes - the last remaining PCW companies - get to bask in unadulterated praise.

Send your nominations to: Joyce '98, PCW Today, 150 Oxford Road, Middlesbrough, Teesside TS5 5EL.

The polls are open, so get ticking!

NOMINATIONS FORM

No. 1 OVERALL PRODUCT

.....

BEST CUSTOMER SERVICE

- ☐ Amstrad
- ☐ Cirtech UK
- ☐ Creative Technology
- ☐ ComSoft
- ☐ Dixons
- ☐ LocoScript Software
- ☐ Pinboard
- ☐ Solent PCW Services
- ☐ SD MicroSystems
- ☐ Other.....

BEST NEW PRODUCT

- ☐ Account Manager
- ☐ All in One
- ☐ Basic 98
- ☐ Black Box 3.5" disc drive
- ☐ Doodlebug
- ☐ Inventory Master
- ☐ LocoScript 4 (Release 2)
- ☐ RoutePlanner
- ☐ Other.....

BEST WORD PROCESSOR

- ☐ LocoScript 3
- ☐ LocoScript 4
- ☐ PcW 16 Word Processor
- ☐ Protext
- ☐ Tasword
- ☐ Other.....

BEST HARDWARE

- ☐ Black Box 3.5" disc drive
- ☐ Flash Drive
- ☐ Gem Hard Drive
- ☐ Key Mouse
- ☐ LocoScript 3.5" disc drive
- ☐ LocoScript Modem Kit
- ☐ Pinboard disc drives
- ☐ Sprinter
- ☐ Other.....

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- ☐ Cirtech UK
- ☐ Creative Technology
- ☐ ComSoft
- ☐ Dixons
- ☐ LocoScript Software
- ☐ Pinboard
- ☐ Solent PCW Services
- ☐ SD MicroSystems
- ☐ Other.....

BEST SOFTWARE

- ☐ LocoFile
- ☐ LocoScript 4
- ☐ MicroDesign 3
- ☐ Money Manager
- ☐ Personal Ledger
- ☐ Rocket
- ☐ Roseanne (PcW 16 O/S)
- ☐ The Network
- ☐ Other.....

BEST INTERNET SITE

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PCW Contacts

OFFERS - 8000 Plus Issues 12-32. Amstrad PCW Issues Aug '87 - May '89. Amstrad Professional Computing Sep '86 - Oct 88. E. Howells 01203 542325.

FOR SALE £12.00 ono - Mini Office Professional Plus 3.5" in its box and with manuals, or exchange for W.H.Y. CP/M only. Stephen Jones, 80 Saunton Road, Rugby, Warwickshire. CV22 6BD. 01788 578439.

PROSCAN Hand scanner + 3" and 3.5" software. Keymouse, SCA 1.5MB MiniRam, Amstrad CPS8246 interface, 9512 DaisyWheel printer + sheet feeder, ribbons and print wheels. Any offers, Ian Roberts 01249 660907.

PCW 8512. Rampac Plus, LocoScript 1-2-3-4, LocoFile, LocMail, MiniOffice Pro, MicroDesign 2, Tweak, Literatus, with all manuals, Pinboard Datadual 3.5" External Drive, PCW/PC Format conversion program. 20 x 3", 40 x 3.5" clean formatted discs, all in good condition. £90 cash, buyer collects. F. Sole, 17 Hyholmes. Bretton. Peterborough PE3 8LG. 01733 261234.

GAMES: Top Twenty Disc 1-2&3 £15.00/set, Scrabble, Trivial Pursuit, Arnhen, Southern Belle, Heathrow £15.00 each. 7 off new Amsoft CF-2 Discs £5 each. Mrs Larner 01732 763255.

FOR SALE Assorted reconditioned PCW, 3 inch programs, manuals, parts, etc. Send large SAE for details. Sales Today, 44 Paynton Road, St Leonards on Sea, East Sussex, TN37 7DY.

WANTED Second hand Key Mouse with interface, willing to pay up to £25. Brian Pratt, 7 Ash Close, Tidworth, Hants SP9 7PG.

SOFTWARE on 3.5". MicroDesign3 and Extra Fonts Disc E, Tweak3, The Network, LocoScript 4.11 complete includes LocoFile, LocoSoft Printer Support Pack. Any offers, Ian Roberts 01249 660907.

WANTED LocoScript 2 or 3 start of day discs for 9512, must have tutor on disc. Contact J. Rowlatt 01733 231905.

CALL for help with LocoScript, CP/M or MicroDeign 2, or just for a chat about PCWs in general. Mon-Sat, 2-8pm. Or write to: Kathleen Thorep, 22 Haddon Way, Long Eaton, Nottingham NG10 3EE. Tel: 0115 9720114.

SOFTWARE: 8000 Plus collection £20.00, Masterfile 8000 £30.00, Easy Labeller £30. Contact Mrs Lardner, 01732 763255.

AMSTRAD 8256 in good order with B: drive fitted. Good home more important than price. If any readers, especially any charitable concern would like to have it, they only need collect/bear any cost of transit. Richard Wyber, 7 Mornington Close, Woodford Green, Essex IG8 0TT.

WANTED PCW 8256 LS2 Swedish & Swedish LocoSpell, PCW9512 3 inch LS3 master/installation disc, PcW9512 3.5 inch master/installation disc (not upgrades!), PcW9256 printer. 01424 713927 (3.00pm-7.00pm only)

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WANTED An 8000 Support Disc for the Cirtech Diamond (not GEM) hard drive. Will pay £5.00. Contact 07000 736427.

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WANTED Manual for PcW 16. Ken Pople, 0117 968 3466.

SOFTWARE on 3". LocoScript 2.29, CP/M v2.15, MicroDesign 2, Bibliotec Wordkey. Any offers, Ian Roberts 01249 660907.

AMSTRAD PCW 8256 complete with LocoScript 2, LocoSpell, CP/M discs £150.00/NEG. Amstrad DMP 3250 D1 Printer, plus 2 new ribbons, £110.00/NEG. Equipe '102' keyboard £90 00/NEG All relevant manuals. Mrs Lardner, 01732 763255.

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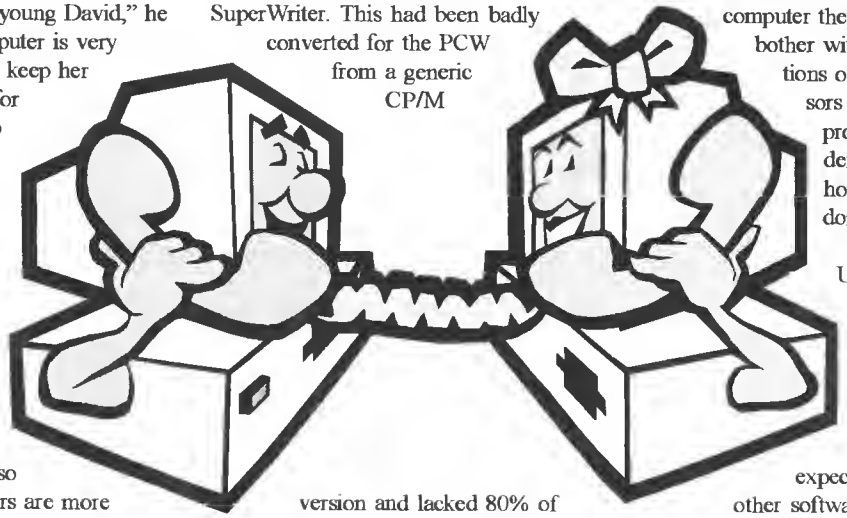
Change and decay

David Langford has got a mistress - or is it just his 9512?

ON THE memorable day when the PCW 9512 upstairs in the spare room went bang (I think as a result of the famous Alan Sugar Surprise, whereby tripping over the printer cable wittily blows the RAM chips), my business partner Chris Priest soon found the appropriate words for the occasion.

"What you must remember, young David," he faxed, "is that owning a computer is very like *having a mistress.* If you keep her on the shelf and neglect her for months or years while you go flirting with younger models, she just won't want to perform for you any more ..."



It was true that the 9512 didn't see much use - I kept this one as a backup but preferred the 8512, on the well-known *Animal Farm* principle of Two Drives Good, One Drive Bad. It's also sadly true that some computers are more equal than others, and that nowadays even the Joyce 8512 gets her bit of slap and tickle only about once a fortnight. So, like a wronged mistress, she too is taking revenge.

This began with a certain reluctance to get started on cold mornings. (Er, can we drop the double-entendres now? *Ed*) My 8512 is probably long overdue for a new belt in Drive A, but still boots up happily once the room is warm enough. I like to think that this is the same problem identified by the great Richard P. Feynman in the inquiry into the *Challenger* shuttle disaster. The shuttle's O-ring seals lost their springiness in cold weather, and so to some extent does an ageing PCW drive belt.

More insidiously, in March 1998 a number of Ansible Information working discs - both Drive A and Drive B format - came down with mild lurgi. Some intermittently wouldn't boot, even though other disks did so happily; some wouldn't yield up certain files. The link seemed to be that they were all very old discs ... as though the whole lot had reached an invisible sell-by date. But they weren't quite dead, and a simple fix was to make a whole-disk copy on to a newer disk, using DISCKIT or LocoScript. Strange but true.

All this caused me to load LocoScript, which for various personal reasons I don't really get on with. One of the most boringly obscure facts of *PCW Plus* history is that in the days when they preferred contributors to fly the flag by loyally writing on a PCW for transfer to Future's Macintoshes, I used a truly grotty old word processor called SuperWriter. This had been badly converted for the PCW from a generic CP/M version and lacked 80% of LocoScript's facilities - but did two things which from a professional writer's viewpoint struck me as more important than the exotic fonts, columns, colours and pictures later added to LocoScript.

Item one was a Find/Exchange function that worked on print controls, such as italics markers. Item two: a simple macro facility allowing the automation of keystroke sequences. Using both together, you could create a little macro that with a single command changed all a document'sitalics or underline marks to some agreed character (strokes, asterisks, underscores) and then converted the result to an ASCII file.

Why? Publishers, scenting the opportunity to save the cost of having material retyped, were starting to ask for text on disk. Later, they wanted it e-mailed. With the exception of *PCW Plus*, my publishers asked for plain ASCII format. But in plain ASCII, generated by LocoScript, all the italics and underline marks (and many others, but those two are the most important print effects in ordinary text) were automatically discarded. When I italicise a word, I want it to *stay* in italics....

There are other reasons why I don't personally fancy LocoScript, but these are probably all my fault. After all, LocoScript was designed to be the only program PCW users would ever run, on the only computer they owned. Rather than bother with people's expectations of how word processors should work, the programmers could definitively say "*This* is how things will be done."

Unfortunately I've been sleeping around too much (oops, forgot we'd abandoned that metaphor) and have several vague expectations based on other software. In LocoScript, directory lists, RETURN or ENTER seem intuitively obvious ways to select a file, but one beeps and does nothing while the other, more insidiously, does nothing and keeps quiet about it. When I get into the wrong LocoScript menu I *still* instinctively hit EXIT or STOP as logical ways out, and curse those unforgiving beeps for a bit before remembering about the unhandily placed CAN key. But, as a special dose of user-hostility ... when you accidentally hit the far-too-handily placed PTR and the whole keyboard becomes a minefield of beeps, it is necessary to note that CAN doesn't work (though it doesn't beep either) and, just for once, EXIT does.

I'm sure there are excellent reasons for all this. Perhaps, when every byte counts, allowing alternative keystrokes - like pressing EXIT to, as it were, exit from a menu - was just too demanding in terms of program size.

Perhaps I'm just a picky sod. (*Muffled Voice From General Direction Of Dorking:* "He's talking sense at last!")
Perhaps I'll go and lie down until next issue....

Company Locator

Aladdink *Tel: 0131 2293122.*
Fabric and film ribbon recycling and re-inking. They also supply DIY re-inking packs.

Amstrad Brentwood House, 169 Kings Road, Brentwood, Essex CM14 4EF. *Tel: 01227 228888. PcW 16 Hotline Support: 0891 515715.*
Manufacturers of the PcW 16 and every other PCW on the planet.

Ansible Information 94 London Road, Reading, Berkshire RG1 5AU. *Tel/Fax: 01424 720457*
If you write a book with LocoScript, you'll need an index. That's where AnsibleIndex comes in.

Comsoft 10 McIntosh Court, Wellpark, Glasgow G31 2HW. *Tel: 0141 5544735.*
The home of Protext. They also sell the brilliant RoutePlanner and Inventory Master for the PcW 16.

Christian Computer Art 33 Bramley Way, Hardwick, Cambridge CB3 7XD. *Tel: 01954 210009.*
If you produce a church magazine, this company supplies a huge range of religious clip art for MicroDesign, sadly on 3.5" only.

Cirtech Monksford Stables, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose TD6 0RU. *Tel: 01835 823898 Fax: 01835 822471.*
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Creative Technology 10 Park Street, Uttoxeter, Staffs ST14 7AG. *Tel: 01889 567160 Fax: 01889 563548.*
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Dave The Disc Doctor *Tel: 01892 835974 E-mail: daves@diskdoctor.co.uk.*
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David Landers Brinkburn Gardens Cottage, Longframlington, Morpeth NE65 8AR. *Tel: 01665 570662.*
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Derrick Gaskin 119 London Road, Brentwood, Essex CM14 4NP.
The house of Quickmyth - a unique range of mythology discs for use with LocoFile.

Garrison Computers 191 Watling Street Road, Fulwood, Preston PR2 4AE. *Tel: 01772 701248 Fax 01772 703131.*
Formerly known as MicroForm, this company have been selling PCW disc drives and spares for years.

LocoScript Software 10 Vincent Works, Dorking, Surrey RH4 3HJ. *Tel: 01306 747757 Fax: 01306 885529 Internet: www.locomotive.com.*
This company is by far the biggest supplier of PCW goods. They supply the full range including, of course, LocoScript 4. Ask for a catalogue.

Mapej Meadow View, Quinta Crescent, Weston Rhyn, Oswestry, Shropshire SY10 7RN. *Tel: 01691 778659 Fax: 01691 777638.*
They'll transfer data between PCWs and just about any other computer you'd care to think of.

Midas Charity Ink "Kynance", 5 Nelson Road, Brixham, South Devon TQ5 8BH. *Tel: Fax: 01803 853144.*
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Office Land 10 Sterte Close, Poole, Dorset BH15 2AT. *Tel: 01202 666155 Fax: 01202 677958.*
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PD Blake 99 Normandy Avenue, Beverley, E. Yorks HU17 8PR. *Tel: 01482 864230 (7-9pm).*
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Philosoft 57 Llwyn-Onn, Penderyn, Aberdare, Wales CF44 9XY. *Tel: 01685 813978.*
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Protext Software Harrowden, 39 High Street, Sutton-in-the-Isle, Ely, Cambridgeshire CB6 2RA. *Tel: 01353 777006 Fax: 01353 777766.*
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Three Inch Software 14 Cartaret Close, Willen, Milton Keynes MK15 9LD. *Tel: 01908 690704.*
They sell the only thesaurus you can buy for LocoScript. Also the 9512 Rescue Kit and PCW Link.

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